

Dr. Haridas Choudhury, who is now in America, undertook the onerous task of editing this book and seeing it through the press but as he had to go out, he could not finish his work. At my request, Prof. Amiya Kumar Mazumdar of the Presidency College and Prof. Jatindra Nath Ganguly of the Malda College looked through the remainder of the book.

Sj. Anil Ghosh of Balurghat made the design for the block and we are thankful to him for this nice design.

Sj. Rabindra Nath Mitra, the proprietor of the Nalanda Press showed his greatness in printing the book at half costs and the members of the press spared no pains to make this book neat and nice.

In spite of the efforts of the editors there are some mistakes but as our readers would be able to correct the same themselves, we have appended no corrigenda.

In conclusion, I beg to inform the kind readers that the Jayanti function does not actually end with this work. The organisers of the Jayanti have started a cultural association called the Bharat Sanskriti Parisat whose aim is to propagate our national culture among the masses.

The association has not been able to make much head way but it has got many loftier ideals and is doing its little work silently and unostentatiously. In the midst of doubt and despair the Parisat wants to bring light and hope. For this purpose, it is opening centres where in study circles, the eternal truths of our Sastras are being tried to be realised by the members. Books on Indian Culture and religion would be published by the Parisat of which one is already in the Press. The Parisat also proposes to send cultural missions to the backward tribes of India and teach them the Central truths of our spiritual heritage.

Its aim is to secure to all human beings the divine gift of spiritual fervour, to enliven all by the message of unities and love and to disseminate among all the citizens of the world, the immortal Brahmanvidya in its practical application to modern life.

We invite all lovers of culture to join us in this noble task of bringing divinity in the daily life of the common man.

We pray to God that Dr. Sarkar would live long and be a tower of strength to the Bharat-Sanskriti Parisat. We hope he would enrich it and make it a glorious success.

NATILAL DAS.

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One must not ignore the important part that the India-section of the museums in Great Britain or the Fine Arts Museums of New York, Boston, Cleveland and other American cities, the *Musée Guimet* of Paris, the *Museum fuer Voelkerkunde* in Berlin and Munich or the Tretiakov Gallery in Moscow have played in contributing not only to the studies in comparative art-history and art-technique but also to the enrichment of modern Western plastic arts by furnishing hints and suggestions. In Vincent Van Gogh the Dutch master's *Letters of a Post-Impressionist* the student of painting is familiar with the *motifs à la japonaise* which were being introduced in Europe about the middle of the last century. India's part in the technique of post-impressionist art will be apparent to observers of the new "artistic" anatomies exhibited by the "moderns" since Cézanne.

Prof. Benoy Sarkar.

THE SPIRIT AND IDEALS OF HINDUISM

I very thankfully appreciate the honour and the kindness of being requested to contribute a paper to a volume on Indian Culture published to commemorate the sixty-fourth birth anniversary of the distinguished philosopher of our country Dr. Mahendranath Sircar who stands out singularly glorious amongst the great philosophers of contemporary India in so remarkably combining in himself profound scholarship and penetrating philosophical acumen with deep spirituality and many-sided mystical realizations. The life of this typical Hindu philosopher is ever an inspiration to those with whom philosophy is something more than a plodding intellectual analysis of the meaning of existence. In the few lines, therefore, which I am going to inscribe here in honour of Dr. Sircar, I have chosen to dwell upon the Spirit and Ideals of Hinduism—the spirit and ideals of our great religion which have produced, and let us hope shall continue to produce in times to come, a personality of the type of Dr. Mahendranath Sircar.

HINDUISM AS A RELIGION

Hinduism is universally recognised as a notable religion amongst the great historical religions of the world but the nature and the definite meaning of Hinduism has always been a puzzle not only to those who are outside the pale of Hinduism but also to those who are within it. The difficulty arises particularly from the fact that unlike other faiths Hinduism is not an appellation for a body of clean-cut doctrines and dogmas and ceremonial

practices to which *all the followers of the faith unanimously and uniformly adhere*. In almost every other faith we have *one Scripture, one Prophet or Founder*, and an almost uniform routine of rituals and external observances. With Hinduism it is not so. The climate of Hinduism could no better be described than in the pithy saying of Sri Ramakrishna—'As many men, so many paths.' Each person within the fold of Hinduism has the highest freedom to choose, according to his dispositional and temperamental make-up, his own mode of worship or approach to the Divine, his own *Ishtam* or Form of Deity with attributes appealing to him most, and his own doctrinal and philosophical views which his other co-religionists may not accept. The recognition of the principle that each person has to adopt his or her own individual mode of approach to the Divine accounts for the fact that amongst the Hindus there are no periodical congregational gatherings for prayer or worship such as we have amongst the followers of other faiths. The central emphasis of Hinduism being on one's own *experience* of the Divine, religion has always been with the Hindu an intimately personal affair, "what he does with his solitariness"—to borrow a phrase of Prof. Whitehead. A Hindu may go to a temple or may not. He is free to worship his God wherever he thinks it best to do so and in whatever form He best appeals to him, and at whatever time he finds it most convenient to himself. He believes that his prayer to God and communion with Him will be deeper and more successful in silence and solitude rather than in a congregational gathering at some public place. This air of highest freedom in matters religious which the Hindus breathe and enjoy has led some critics to declare that it is no religion at all. Hinduism, it has been said, "is really an anthropological process to which, by a strange irony of fate, the name of 'religion' has been given." It has

also been said that the absence of a common congregational prayer or worship and a common body of doctrines and dogmas has been responsible for the slackness of organisation and the absence of a sense of national solidarity and unity amongst the Hindus. Now, criticisms such as these—whatever justifications there may be for them from extra-religious stand-points—are quite off the point so far as real religious growth is concerned. Hinduism believes that the spiritual evolution of a man to be real and effective must proceed along the lines of his own "individuality," his own sum of congenital dispositions and *samskarika* make-up. Religion with the Hindu is essentially Yoga or the discipline and culture of uniting oneself with the Divine, and not merely a round of routines or dogmas and beliefs. Accordingly, it presents different *Yogas* or spiritual paths of union with the Supreme to suit different temperaments and capacities. All these paths, as Swami Vivekananda showed in recent times, can be brought principally under four heads. These are (i) *Jnana-Yoga* or the path of union through philosophical inquiry, (ii) *Bakti-Yoga* or the path of union through devotion, (iii) *Karma-Yoga* or the path of union through self-less and disinterested action, and (iv) *Raja-Yoga* or the path of union through psychic control. Allowing, of course, for their overlapping in some measure, these paths are meant respectively for men of predominantly philosophic, devotional, activistic and rigorously scientific temperaments and outlook.

This catholic all-comprehensiveness of Hinduism is its unique and most vital feature. All modes of worship, all avenues of approach to the Supreme are justified. "Whoever, in whatever manner cometh unto Me, in that manner do I meet him; for, verily, men through all their diverse paths are treading My own path," says Shri Krishna in the Bhagwad-Gita. Every sincere religious

effort, whatever be its outer garb, is a step towards the Most High.

IMAGE WORSHIP

So it is that image worship also finds a place in the scheme of Hindu religious practices. Image worship has been the subject of much adverse criticism at the hands of non-Hindus. Unfortunately the latter have never cared to understand its true implications and purposes and enter into the spirit and ideals behind the formal external practice. The critic has always misrepresented the case of the image-worshipper by taking a very naive and crude view of the whole process. He thinks that the worshipper literally identifies the Divine with the material stuff, the lump of the stone or the metal, of which the image is made, forgetting that the image is to the worshipper only a symbol of his Beloved, a concrete and constant reminder to him of the Lord of his life. So what the Hindu worships is not the 'idol' as a piece of brute matter but the Ideal which it symbolises. The external symbol is only an aid and a stimulus to the awakening of the spirit of devotion within. Dr. James H. Cousins rightly and pertinently observes: "Worship, be its technique what it may, is a projection of the spirit of Man towards the Spirit of the Universe. The lines of that projection pass beyond the ostensible objects of the act of worship and converge in the Cosmic Personality." (Foreword to *Heathen Essays*).

The images carved by the Hindus symbolise the various attributes of God. It is the Divine Spirit which is worshipped in them. Before images are installed and worshipped, there is an indispensable prior ceremonial called "infusion of the Spirit" (*prana-pratishtha*) in which the priest or the worshipper prays to the Deity to come and be present in the image. Another significant ceremonial is the immersion (*visarjana*) of images after they have been worshipped for certain prescribed periods.

of time. This makes it clear that the worshipper has not to remain attached to the material of the image. That mage-worship, performed with the right mood of the mind and in the true spirit, *does* eventually conduce to genuine spiritual elevation is proved in the lives of numerous illustrious saints of India. Suffice it to mention here only one name—so well-known in modern times—Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, who began his spiritual career as a worshipper of the image of Kali in the temple of Dakshineshwara and eventually rose to the sublimest heights of spiritual realizations.

Not are the idols or images of the Hindus mere meaningless or arbitrarily chosen figures or lumps of matter. They are the concrete and visible expressions in forms of Art of some of the deepest philosophical ideas of the Hindus. A Hindu image, properly understood, is Philosophy objectified into a work of Art, pressed into the service of Religion. It typifies the organic unity of Philosophy, Religion and Art, which is the key-note of Hindu culture. Take, for instance, the image of Kali, the Divine Mother worshipped all over India. In her image the Mother who represents the Cosmic Energy of the ever-changing, ever-moving universe in space and time is shown as planting her feet on the prostrate body of Shiva, the Eternal Immutable Spirit, lying tranquil and self-absorbed and unaware, as it were, of the dance of Death and Destruction over His breast. The figure expresses the idea that the entire spatio-temporal cosmic process is rooted in and sustained by the abiding Supreme Spirit, the Lord Shiva; that the world of movement, of clash and catastrophe, of death and disaster, is not all, it is only a phenomenal self-expression of the Eternal Spirit abiding everlastingly in His transcendent and supra-cosmic glory. The release of cosmic Energy from the Silent Source has brought in its wake possibilities of terrific conflicts and catastrophes

such as those which we experience on occasions of wars and earthquakes etc., but even so, the cosmic process is not without its saving graces. In human history, periods of war and destruction are known to be invariably followed by periods of peace and construction. Not infrequently does concord come through discord. Grace and beatitude have always been assured to the devotee of God. The dark naked body of the Mother adorned with a garland of human skulls and chopped off limbs, blood dripping from them, yet wears a peculiar smile on her face and holds one of Her right hands in a pose of benediction pointing to Her devotees not to be dismayed and disheartened by the forces of evil and destruction that may seem to have triumphed for the time being, but to face them with courage and fight the battle of life for the ultimate victory of the Good. Such is the inspiring message of the image of Kali. Other instances could be adduced to show the rich meaningfulness of Hindu images, but that would hardly be permissible within the short space of the present essay.

Symbols have an indispensable role in all religious systems, but Hinduism has an abundance of them. This is because of the peculiarly artistic and mystic bent of the Hindu mind. I cannot resist the temptation of giving some account here of the *Pranava* and the *Swastika*, the two of the most popular mystic symbols of Hinduism. The *Pranava* or Om with which all *mantras* and ceremonials of Hinduism start, is the verbal symbol of the All, the *Brahman*. It is a symbolic representation of the entirety of conscious experience comprised of *Jagrat* or the Waking, *Svapna* or the Dream, *Susupti* or the Deep Dreamless Sleep and *Turiya* or the trans-phenomenal experience of the Absolute. The first three states of conscious experience are respectively represented by the three syllables of which Om is composed viz., A(ॐ), U(ॐ) and M(ॐ) and the

fourth syllableless part which it is supposed to contain represents the last. Swami Vivekananda in his *Raja Yoga* has tellingly argued that the word Om is the best and the most universal symbol of God in so far as it is the ultimate generalisation of all possible sounds. "The word Om" he writes, "is composed of three letters A, U and M. The first letter A, is the root sound, the key-note, and it is pronounced without touching any part of the tongue or the palate; M represents the last sound in the series, being produced by closing the lips, and in producing the letter U the sound rolls from the very root to the end of the sounding board of the mouth. Thus Om represents the whole phenomena of sound production. That being so it must be the natural symbol, the matrix of all the various sounds. It denotes the whole range and possibility of all the words that can be made." The *Swastika* (स्वस्तिका) is the other popular mystic symbol used by the Hindus. It has lines pointing in all directions, symbolising the all-pervasiveness of God, pointing to the fact whichever way we may turn we are confronted by the presence of the Divine. Then, again a second feature of the Swastika is this that though its lines point to all directions, they do not make a closed figure, thus symbolising the inexhaustibility of God. God remains inexhaustible, though worlds on worlds may ever be issuing from it. "Having pervaded all this universe with a fragment of Myself, I remain" says Shri Krishna in the Bhagwad-Gita. *Pado'sya visva bhootani tripadasyamritam divi*—"One quarter of It is all this manifested universe, and three-quarters of It remain in the Immortal sphere" says the Veda.

Some Cardinal Principles of Hinduism.

(a) ITS CONCEPT OF THE UNIVERSE.

The Infinite Spirit or Brahman, according to Hinduism, is the source, sustenance and ground of dissolution of the entire manifested universe, including the

world of the living as well as that of the non-living. The Hindu Weltanschauung has been admirably summed up by Dr. James H. Cousins in these words: "From time immemorial she (India) has asserted that the universe is really a universe, the elaboration of the Life of the One Divine Being into limitations and varieties within Itself for Its own joy. In this Life every atom shares according to its ability to respond to impacts from beyond itself. Grouping takes place, and the evolution of media of various grades of consciousness which become increasingly aware of themselves, later of one another, and ultimately of the universal Self. Such, in a few words, is the dominating, pervading, shaping thought of India. It sees for humanity a spiritual origin and spiritual destiny, and between first and last an interaction that loses intolerance in its remembrance of the universal source, and sheds materialism in its anticipation of a super-material destiny." (*Heathen Essays*, p. 30).

A common idea of all the systems of Hindu philosophy is the notion of the cyclic progression of the universe, that is, the notion of vast periods of creation (*janma*) and duration (*sthiti*) of the universe alternating with periods of regression into its primordial or causal form (*pralaya*). This cyclic progression of the universe is beginningless and endless. It is compared to the out-breathing and in-breathing, the diastole and the systole, of the Cosmic Heart. The endlessness of the cyclic process, the view that each manifested creation of the universe is an emergency from its prior unmanifested or causal form, steers clear of the enigmatic notion of "creation out of nothing," so that the Hindu view of creation, as Swami Vivekananda used to say, could better be expressed as "projection."

(b) ITS CONCEPTION OF GODHEAD.

Hinduism affirms that the Supreme Spirit in its ultimate essence is ineffable, "*avangemenasagocharam*";

speech cannot communicate It, intellect cannot comprehend It. The impossibility of all positive determinations does not mean the nothingness or emptiness of God, but rather, as Hoffding says about the mystical concept of God that "it is precisely the inexhaustible positivity which bursts through every conceptual form and turns every determination into an impossibility." No concept of the human understanding can be adequate to the ultimate Unity transcending the polarisation of subject and object. The unspeakable nature of the Divine Essence is thus brought out in a highly suggestive verse of the *Kenopanishad*: "Brahman is truly comprehended by him who knows it as incomprehensible; he knows it not who thinks it is comprehended by him. It is unknown to those who know and known to those who do not know."

Hinduism, therefore, defines Godhead in its two aspects (i) the *Nirguna* or the Absolute aspect to which no concept of the relational human understanding can be adequate, and (ii) the *Saguna* aspect in which the Absolute Spirit is viewed from the cosmic and the human end as the source and sustenance of the manifested universe, the Creator, Preserver and Destroyer of the world-process. Western mystics also distinguished between the impersonal and personal aspects of the Supreme. Eckhart, for example, contrasts the Godhead (*Deitas*) with God (*Deus*).

(c) ITS CONCEPT OF THE SELF.

One of the grandest truths which Hinduism declares is the essential divinity of the self of man. Though on the question of the metaphysical theory of the relation of the self to the Absolute the different systems of Vedantic philosophy differ, yet they are all agreed in holding that the inmost self of man is of the nature of pure spirit, immortal and indestructible. Hinduism distinguishes the real transcendental self of man which is

the ever pure and ever blissful spirit from the empirical individual—'the eating, drinking, sleeping man' as Emerson called it. Salvation according to Hinduism is, in the end, *self-realization* or the realization of the true self of man as the eternal indestructible and divine spirit. Salvation is thus not an acquisition of something *ab extra*, something which did not originally belong to the self, but the realization of what the self *eternally* is. The self is Freedom, the self is Knowledge, the self is Bliss. According to Hinduism there can never be such a thing as "eternal damnation" for men; rather there is within their reach Eternal Glory for they are the 'children of immortality' (*amritasya pulrah*). Religion, as Hinduism understands it, is, in the memorable words of Swami Vivekananda, "the manifestation of divinity *already* in man." Robert Browning only echoes the Vedantic philosophy of the self, when he writes the following in his *Paracelsus*:

There is an inmost centre in us all,
Where truth abides in fullness; and around,
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,
This perfect, clear perception—which is truth.
A baffling and perverting carnal mesh
Binds it, and makes all error.

(d) THE ETHICS OF HINDUISM.

Hinduism is a deeply ethical religion. It sees no chance for man attaining his final spiritual destiny without a complete ethical transformation. Hinduism demands, as a ransom for God-realization, a life of snow-white purity, absolute truthfulness and disinterested service. "Not by those who have not turned away from evil conduct, nor by those who are not tranquil and composed, nor by those who have not tempered the repulsive tendencies of their minds, can the Atman be attained," says the Kathopanishad.

Two objections are generally conspicuously urged against Hindu ethics by its critics. One that, Hinduism, accentuating as it does a mystical goal beyond good and evil and as such a-moral or super-moral, fails to put the proper emphasis on moral values; and secondly that Hinduism putting all its emphasis on individual perfection or salvation has not provided in an adequate measure for moral obligations to the society or the community. Regarding the first objection, we may point out that the emphatic insistence of the Upanishads on perfect morality as the condition *sine qua non* of Self-realization should remove the mis-understanding from the minds of those critics of Hinduism who think that it is unethical or makes light of morality since it envisages the state of perfection as beyond good and evil. Of course, Hinduism does declare that in the ultimate state of transcendental freedom the 'moral stress,' as every other kind of stress, is transcended; but it lays down with equal emphasis that morality is necessary to reach the Goal. As we must sail along the current in order to reach beyond it, so we must follow the path of morality to come to the state of super-moralism. Furthermore, the *transcendence* of good and evil in Hindu thought is clearly distinguishable from the *defiance* of good and evil by the superman in Nietzsche's teachings on the one hand, and on the other, from the theory of the *fusion* of good and evil in the fullness of the Absolute in the philosophy of Bradley.

The other objection that there is a sad lack of humanistic principles in Hindu ethical thought is also far from truth. In the Rig-Veda, the earliest sacred book of the Hindus, we find it said in a hymn of a rich man who does not give of his wealth to the poor that "He eats alone, and he alone is guilty." (Rv. 10.117). In the scheme of the Five-fold Sacrifices or *Pancha-Maha-Yajnas* which is binding on every Hindu house-holder,

the inclusion of *Nriyajna* is a clear insistence on man's indebtedness to his society or fellowmen. The *Bhagwad-Gita* puts forth the most forceful and eloquent plea for every man doing his *swadharma* which means nothing but the sum of duties and obligations which he owes to his society by virtue of his particular station in the social order as determined by his own congenital psychological make-up. The entire scheme of *varnashrama dharma* in Hinduism was designed with the double purpose of allowing the individual to grow to his highest stature in life as well as securing from him services of the highest usefulness to the society. The *varna-vyavastha* or the classification of society into four *varnas*, *Brahmin*, *Kshatriya*, *Vaishya* and *Shudra*, which has degenerated into the present day "caste system" was meant by its originators for the upkeep and solidarity of the society by securing from the individual services to the social whole according to his innate capacities and potentialities. By assigning separate functions to different classes of society, the institution was intended to be conducive to efficiency and specialization and to avoid confusion and competition. Each class was to stick to its assigned function for the upkeep of the social whole. Those with a reflective and strongly spiritual bent of mind are the *Brahmins*; the heroic and the spirited are the *Kshatriyas*; those having aptitude for the practical business of life such as commerce and industries etc., are the *Vaishyas*; and the unskilled workers are the *Shudras*. It should never be forgotten that this is a natural or psychological classification based on innate capacities and qualities of character and not mere hereditary caste system.

Corresponding and complementary to the *varna-dharma* or the scheme of four classes in the social order, Hinduism marks out four successive stages in the life of each individual, the *ashrama-dharma* as it has been called. The first is the stage of the *Bramacharin* or the

student, the stage of body-building, character-building and acquisition of knowledge. In this most formative period of life, all care is taken to build the moral and intellectual tissues, not merely by formal instructions but also by a way of life. The *Brahmacharin* has to lead a life of unbroken continence, inculcate the utmost simplicity and humility in his life by living on the barest necessities and even begging his daily food, and has to devote himself unreservedly to the acquisition of knowledge. After this period of apprenticeship is over, the student is entitled to enter into the second stage of life, the life of the *grihastha* or the householder. Now he has to maintain a family and fulfil his various obligations to the society or the community. Hinduism does not favour the idea of the individual wearing himself out in the stress and storm of worldly life and social obligations. After there has been enough of this, the couple is permitted to enter the third stage of life, that of *vanaprastha* or retirement into some sacred place "far from the maddening crowd." It is here that he can find opportunities "to pause for quiet meditation, to muse at leisure upon the deep things of the spirit, to set aside ample space for seeking the Divine Presence." Last comes *Sanyasa* or the stage of complete renunciation, the life of the itinerant monk, 'the journey of the alone to the Alone.' The Hindu ideal of the four stages of life is thus beautifully expressed by Rabindranath Tagore: "As the day is divided into morning, noon, afternoon, and evening, so India has divided man's life into four parts, following the requirements of his nature. The day has the waxing and waning of its light; so has man the waxing and waning of his powers. Acknowledging this, India gave a connected meaning to his life from start to finish. First *Brahmacharya*, the period of discipline in education; then *garhasthya*, that of the world's work; then *vanaprastha*, the expectant awaiting

of freedom across death. From individual body to community, from community to universe, from universe to Infinity, this is the soul's normal progress." (*Religion of Man*: Pp. 198-99).

ATTITUDE TOWARDS OTHER RELIGIONS

From the remotest antiquity, it has been a cardinal principle of the religious thought of the Hindus that there is but one Supreme Spirit which is the identical goal of all religious efforts, howsoever varied be their outer forms and methods. "*Ekam sadvipra bahudha vadanti*—there is but one Supreme Spirit whom the wise call by various names" declared the Rig-Veda. A spirit of friendliness and tolerance towards men of other faiths has always been regarded by the Hindus as the very first principle of spiritual etiquette. Proselytization in any form has been to the Hindus, as it should be to any civilised community worth the name, an anathema. Admitting as the Hindus do, the immeasurability and ineffability of the Godhead, they cannot but regard any pretension of a finality in religion as an unblushing audacity of the human mind. "Tolerance" as Prof. S. Radhakrishnan aptly remarks, "is the homage which the finite mind pays to the inexhaustibility of the Infinite" (*Eastern Religions and Western Thought*: P. 317).

It is the saddest irony of human history that religion which should have been the most powerful cementing force amongst mankind has proved the greatest disintegrating agency and brought unspeakable miseries to peoples. If ever the dream of human brotherhood is to become a reality on this earth, it will only be so in the wake of a genuine inter-religious understanding. One of the reasons why religion has ceased to be a dominating force in contemporary history is precisely this that hostile religions, instead of fighting their common enemy

irreligion,' have been wasting their energies in mutual dissensions. A new inter-religious understanding is the need of the present day world. Hinduism, through its great sage Sri Ramakrishna Paramhansa, has sounded a new message to humanity. In the life of Ramakrishna Paramhansa, Hindu mysticism or mysticism as such for the matter of that, scales the highest peaks and achieves the widest comprehensiveness hitherto known to humanity. The epochal significance of the mystical life of Sri Ramakrishna, the highest fulfilment of Hinduism, lies in this that it has been the most authentic vindication in modern times, not theoretically or through argument but through actual mystical realization, of the vitality and validity not only of the diverse courses of spiritual discipline within the pale of Hinduism such as the Yogic, Vaishnavic, Tantric, Vedantic etc., but also of other faiths, principally Christianity and Islam. Nothing could be a more valuable lesson for humanity to-day than the ideal of religious universalism and fraternity of faiths that emerges from the life of Ramakrishna. I crave the indulgence of my readers for allowing me to quote a few sentences here from what I wrote elsewhere *apropos* of this subject: " Ramakrishna had the genius to make the unique experiment of *practising* the different religions *as their respective adherents would do* and then realizing mystically that all religions lead to the same goal. Ramakrishna's life is the most crushing refutation witnessed by man of the Monroe doctrine in the sphere of religion. His life has shed the most valuable light on the rationale of religious harmony and toleration. Religions have based their claims to universality on dogmas avowedly indemonstrable by reason, on the plausibility of certain theories which try to explain one religion to be the most developed and culminating phase of all others, on certain scriptural statements and on the claims of prophets and messiahs to have received the

highest revelations, and so on. All these attempts have proved futile. In the light of Sri Ramakrishna's life and experiences we learn that a justification of religious tolerance is to be found, not in any theory or dogmas, but in the realization of the fact that *all the principal religions of the world, when PRACTISED in their essentials lead ultimately to the same goal*; and therefore as a body of spiritual discipline and a system of spiritual culture leading up to the Divine, each religion is as good as another. No one religion can claim to be the only pathway to God. It is only when we view religions as pathways to God, as bodies of spiritual discipline and life transforming ethical principles that we find them all to be essentially identical and leading to the same goal. The vital thing in a religious system is not *theory* but *practice*. When Sri Ramakrishna wanted to know whether all religions are true and lead to the same goal, he did not inquire into their principles of theoretical import, but proceeded to *practise* their cardinal disciplines in their historic forms one by one and realized in his own experience that they were all conducive to the same goal. No rationale or justification of religious tolerance can ever be found, if it is sought in some theory or dogma or the claims of special or miraculously attested revelations. Universal religion is not *this* religion or *that* religion, but *the universal ideal of religion running in and through* all the historical religious systems as the common vital inner core within the varying sheaths of beliefs and dogmas, forms and practices, theories and rituals, conditioned by the historical and cultural circumstances which brought them into being. It exists like the air we breathe and the light of the sun which nourishes all life.

With this ideal of religious universalism in view, the attempt to find a universal religion in an eclectic combination of fragments of all faiths or in some brand

new formula becomes a palpable absurdity."¹ Humanity is sure to take a long stride forward towards the achievement of a genuine and lasting world brotherhood, if Ramakrishna's ideal of religious universalism be made the rallying-point on the spiritual plane of peoples and nations professing different faiths.

THE HINDU CONCEPT OF PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH TO IT

Is there a distinctive Hindu concept of philosophy? The question must unhesitatingly be answered in the affirmative. The very word for philosophy in Hindu thought, *darshan*, is significant. The word *darshan* literally means 'that by which we see' (*drishyate anena iti*). Seeing is here used as a blanket term to cover both intellectual comprehension as well as intuitive perception. Philosophy in India has not simply been "a thinking consideration of things" but it has essentially been, as Sri Aurobindo puts it, "the intellectual canaliser of spiritual knowledge and experience." Western philosophical constructions have always proceeded on the assumption that thought is the sole mirror of reality. "If you ask me what reality is," says Bosanquet, "you can in the end say nothing but that it is the whole which thought is always endeavouring to affirm."² The difference between the Hindu and Western approaches to philosophy has thus been brought out by Sri Aurobindo: "Philosophy is in the western way of dealing with it a dispassionate enquiry by the light of the reason into the first truths of existence, which we shall get at either by observing the facts which science places at our disposal or by a careful dialectical scrutiny of the concepts of the reason or a mixture of the two methods.

1. Vide the writer's article on *The Legacy of Sri Ramakrishna in The Vedanta Kesari*, Nov., 1947.

2. *Contemporary British Philosophy: First Series*: P. 60.

But from the spiritual view-point truth of existence is to be found by intuition and inner experience and not only by the reason and by scientific observation; the work of philosophy is to arrange the data given by the various means of knowledge, excluding none, and put them into their synthetic relation to the one Truth, the one supreme and universal reality. Eventually, its real value is to prepare a basis for spiritual realisation and the growing of the human being into his divine nature. Science itself becomes only a knowledge of the world which throws an added light on the spirit of the universe and his way in things. Nor will it confine itself to a physical knowledge and its practical fruits or to the knowledge of life and man and mind based upon the idea of matter or material energy as our starting-point; a spiritualised culture will make room for new fields of research, for new and old psychical sciences and results which start from spirit as the first truth and from the power of mind and of what is greater than mind to act upon life and matter."

In the Hindu tradition, the emphasis has always been put on Philosophy as a Way of Life, a spur to spiritual vision and communion. Philosophical reflection, unless it stirs one's being spiritually, is from the Hindu point of view, a barren waste of logical legerdemain. We must fly on the wings of thought to the domain of the Effulgent Spirit. "All of us, I presume," writes Bradley, "more or less, are led beyond the region of ordinary facts. Some in one way and some in others, we seem to touch and have communion with what is beyond the visible world. In various manners we find something higher, which both supports and humbles, both chastens and transports us. And, with certain persons, the intellectual effort to understand the universe is a principal way of thus experiencing the Deity. No

one, probably, who has not felt this, however differently he might describe it, has ever cared much for metaphysics."⁴ This is pre-eminently true of Hindu philosophers. A chastening of life and a deepening of the intuitive receptivity must go hand in hand with the intellectual endeavour to understand reality, and the two processes are held to be complementary to each other and mutually helpful.

According to the Vedantic thinkers philosophical attitude is judged from, and is declared to be a necessary consequence of, 'the formation of philosophical attitudes.' Accordingly, they make equipment in the Four-fold Discipline (*Sadhan-Chatushtaya*) the condition *sine qua non* precedent to the study of the Vedanta philosophy. It embodies the Hindu idea of 'the philosophic way of life.' The four parts of the Discipline are (a) *sama-damadi-sadhan-sampat* or the six preliminary disciplines to be adopted in the conduct of life, consisting of *sama*, *dama* etc., a disciplinary scheme to give the mind calmness, inwardness, endurance and singleness of purpose; (b) *Nityanityavastu-viveka* or to constant habit of discriminating the Eternal from the ephemeral, a habit calculated to stir the soul to its depths in seeking the Eternal; (c) *Ihamutra-phala-bhoga-viraga* or the constant resolution to relinquish all desire for the enjoyment of fruits of actions here or hereafter and to fix one's heart and soul one-pointedly on Illumination as the one goal of life; and (d) *Mumukshutva* or the intense longing for Emancipation, 'the throbbing of the soul like the sea for the larger life in the Infinite.'

A notable characteristic of every system of Hindu philosophy has been its completeness as a "system," embodying its own logic and epistemology, psychology and eschatology and theories of soul and salvation, in radical contrast with the 'microscopic' outlook of some

4. *Appearance and Reality*: Intz: p. 5.

of the most influential contemporary schools of Western philosophy which are content to discuss and anatomise a single philosophical problem. G. E. Moore, the founder-father of modern realism, suggests that truth and system-building cannot go together when he says that "To strive for unity and system at the cost of truth is not the real business of philosophy, although that has been the custom in the practice of philosophers." A revolt against 'system-building' in philosophy is an outstanding characteristic of twentieth century western thought. But what is the philosophical pursuit worth, unless it be that

'fine, fiery speed of thought

By which the ends of the world are brought

Together.....' ?

Every school of Hindu thought attempts a solution of the problem of the ultimate destiny of man, which is regarded as the very *raison d'être* of the philosophical pursuit.

True it is that we cannot rest content merely with glorying in the philosophic achievements of our past but should contribute a new classic of philosophical thought to the modern world, a new synthesis of knowledge, but in doing this, as in every other form of our cultural activity, we should preserve our own cultural soul. I can do nothing better in closing this very brief dissertation on the spirit and ideals of Hinduism than quote the warning which Sri Aurobindo has sounded to us: "We should not allow our cultural independence to be paralysed by the accident that at the moment Europe came in upon us, we were in a state of ebb and weakness, such as comes some day upon all civilisations. That no more proves that our spirituality, our culture, our leading ideas, were entirely mistaken and the best we can do is vigorously to Europeanise, rationalise, materialise ourselves in the practical parts of life—keeping perhaps some spirituality, religion, Indianism as a graceful decoration

in the background—than the great catastrophe of the war proves that Europe's science, her democracy, her progress were all wrong and she should return to the Middle Ages or imitate the culture of China or Turkey or Tibet. Such generalisations are the facile falsehoods of a hasty and unreflecting ignorance. We should be as faithful, as free in our dealings with the Indian spirit and modern influences; correct what went wrong with us; apply our spirituality on broader and freer lines, be if possible not less but more spiritual than were our forefathers; admit western science, reason, progressiveness, the essential modern ideas, but on the basis of our own way of life and assimilated to our spiritual aim and ideal; open ourselves to the throb of life, the pragmatic activity, the great modern endeavour, but not therefore abandon our fundamental view of God and man and nature. There is no real quarrel between them; for rather these two things need each other to fill themselves in, to discover all their own implications, to awaken to their own richest and deepest significances. India can best develop herself and serve humanity by being herself and following the law of her own nature."

Prof. S. N. L. Shrivastava.

THE HINDU THEORY OF THE WORLD

By the Hindu theory of the world is meant the whole body of ideas about the nature, origin and destruction of the world as found in Hinduism or Hindu religion. Although Hinduism is ordinarily taken to mean only Hindu religious rites and ceremonies, customs and practices, yet it more properly means both Hindu religious ideas and ways of life. Hinduism as a religion is neither only a system of abstract ideas without any connection with practical life nor merely a set of practical rules which one is to follow blindly in one's life without any understanding of their basic rational principles. The religious rites and customs which bring out the practical aspect of Hinduism have behind them a system of ideas and theories which constitute their rational foundation. Of these, the ideas of God, self and the world are the most important. Here we propose to explain the Hindu idea or theory of the world.

In Hinduism the world is called *Brahmāṇḍa*, a word which literally means the "egg of Brahma" and suggests that the world is evolved out of Brahma, the personified creative energy of God. The world generally means a universe which comprises seven lokas or regions, namely, the *bhūr-loka* or the earth, with seven subterranean talas or surfaces, the *bhūvar-loka* or the sky with the planets and the stars, the *svar-loka* or the first heaven just above the sky, *mahar-loka* or the second heaven, *jann-loka* or the third heaven, *tapā-loka* or the fourth heaven, and *satya-loka* or the fifth heaven. These seven lokas or regions are within the *Brahmāṇḍa* which thus contains the solar system and many other regions within

it. But even beyond it, there lie two other lokas, namely, Vaikuntha and Go-loka or the sixth and seventh heaven.' Now, we are told that there are many or rather, innumerable Brahmandas or world systems. The succession of Brahmandas in time is beginningless and endless, and all around this Brahmanda of ours there blaze an infinite number of other similar Brahmandas.' One Brahmanda comes into being, lasts for a period of time and then disappears, only to be succeeded by another which also passes through the same cycle; and the cycle goes on repeating itself eternally. But the process of evolution in the separate Brahmandas and the whole universe containing many Brahmandas is the same or very similar. Here we shall be concerned with the evolution of the world or Brahmanda in which we live, move and have our being.

Hinduism does not believe in the creation of the world out of nothing. On the other hand, it generally holds that the world is evolved by God out of Himself, although we sometimes find in it the idea that the world is created by God out of pre-existing material or that it is evolved by Prakriti or primal matter out of herself independently of the agency of God or the self. The ideas that the world comes out of God by a process of evolution, that it is sustained by God and that it finally returns to Him on dissolution, which govern the general trend of Hindu religious thought, are very well explained by reference to several analogies. 'Just as the spider weaves its web from within itself and draws it in, the herbs spring from the earth, and hair grows out of a man's body, so does the world come out of the immutable God.' 'Just as from a blazing fire sparks are thrown off in thousands, so from God various beings are born and to Him they return.' Then we are told more

1. Cf. *Vishnu-purana*, I, 34; II, 7; *Devī-bhāgavata*, IX, 8-10, 12-16.
2. *Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad*, VI; *Devī-bhāgavata*, IX, 34, 7, 8.

directly and plainly that from God issue forth life, mind, the senses, ether, air, fire, water, earth, and gods, men, birds and beasts.¹ The same idea is more philosophically expressed in the later Hindu scriptures. God has a lower nature which is differentiated into eight forms, namely, earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and the ego. He has a higher nature which is manifested as the world of individual selves. All beings, conscious and unconscious, arise out of this two-fold nature of God who is thus the origin and end of the whole universe.²

The account of evolution of the world out of God as given in the ancient scriptures, which is more imaginative and mythological, is as follows. 'He (God) having meditated, desiring to create various beings from His own body, first put forth the waters; in these He placed the seed. That became a golden egg, as radiant as the sun. In that was born Brahma, the grandsire of all worlds.' This means that it is God's will to create a world that moves prakṛti or the primal divine energy to act and conceive Brahma or Hiraṇyagarbha, the world-soul, who is endowed with infinite powers of knowledge, will and action. Now Brahma is the creator of the world in all its aspects, subtle and gross, mental and physical. He does not create the world out of nothing, but evolves it out of Himself. Brahma is surrounded by prakṛti or pradhana, the ultimate cosmic energy, in which the guṇas or its constituent elements are held in equilibrium. His energy disturbs the equilibrium and there is a tremendous motion in prakṛti; and as a result thereof, there is the appearance of mahat or buddhi, the cosmic consciousness. Out of buddhi comes ahankara, the principle of individuation which differentiates homogeneous, primal matter into atoms of the finest kind. With the predominance of tamas in prakṛti,

1. *Mundako Upaniṣad*, I, i. 7; II, i. 3, 7.

2. Cf. *Bhagavad-gītā*, VII, 4-6; 2, 20.

3. *Naṭo-sūtri*, I, 6, 9; cf. also I, 11.

there arise, out of *ahamkara*, the five *tanmatras* or subtle essences of ether, air, fire, water and earth. And out of these, again, the gross elements of the same name are formed by the combination of the one with the others in different proportions. Similarly, with the predominance of *rajas*, *ahamkara* gives rise to the five sense-organs and the five action-organs. The same *ahamkara* when dominated by *sattva* generates the ten presiding deities of the sense and motor organs, and the mind which is their co-ordinating organ. The work of creation proceeds by calling into existence the *devas* or deities who guide and control the forces of nature. All objects of the physical world—minerals, planets, animals, men—appear after the primary creations of *mahat*, the subtle elements and sense-motor organs. The gross elements compose the physical bodies of the *jivas* and the various *lokas* or globes which they inhabit. Their subtle bodies are formed by the subtle elements and the subtle products of *prakṛti*. The sum-total of all subtle bodies is the body of *Brahma*. As *Brahma* is concerned with the creation of the world, so *Viṣṇu*, the personified conservative energy of God, preserves and maintains the world in existence, and *Śiva*, the god of destruction, disintegrates and destroys it at the end. These three—creation, maintenance and destruction—make one complete cycle (*kalpa*) which has been repeating itself eternally. One cycle is as long as a day and night of *Brahma*, each being equal to 432 million years of men. The idea that all things and beings of the world arise out of *prakṛti* through the influence of God is concisely, although figuratively, expressed in the *Bhagavad-gītā* where it is stated that all beings arise out of *mahad-brahma* or *prakṛti* which is the matrix into which God infuses the germ of creation, and that God is the Father and *prakṛti*, the matrix of all creation.¹

1. *Bhagavad-gītā*, xiv, 3-4.

Coming to the Hindu systems of philosophy, we find somewhat different theories of creation in them. These are more rational than the Pauranic accounts, but not completely free from the influence of the mythological tradition. They, however, agree on one important point which is not so clearly brought out in the ancient scriptures. This is the rationale of creation, or the moral background of the created universe. In Hinduism the world is regarded as a moral stage for the education and emancipation of individual souls. It is not the play of blind physical forces which fortuitously produce the world to no purpose. On the other hand, the order and history of the world are ultimately guided by the moral law of *karma*, according to which all individual souls must reap the fruits of their own deeds done in this or the previous life. The world is created, maintained and destroyed by God so that individual selves may have just those experiences of pleasure and pain which they deserve by their good or bad actions. The creation and destruction of the world thus serve the moral end of Divine dispensation. This moral outlook is what constitutes the fundamental unity of the chief systems of Hindu philosophy which differ, more or less, from one another with regard to the nature of the world and the process of creation.

In the Nyaya-Vaisesika system we find a philosophy which combines pluralism with theism. It believes in many independent realities like the four kinds of atoms of earth, water, fire and air, *akasa* or ether, space, time, minds and souls. According to it, God creates the world of composite objects out of these pre-existing materials. But the process of creation and destruction of the world is guided and controlled by God in view of the moral law of *karma*. God wills to create a world in which individual souls may get their proper share of the experience of pleasure and pain according to their moral

deserts. When God thus wills to create a world, the unseen forces of moral deserts (*adrsta*) in the eternal, individual souls begin to function in the direction of creation and the active life of experiences (*bhoga*). It is contact with souls, endowed with the creative function of *adrsta*, that first sets in motion the atoms of air. Out of the combination of air-atoms arises the gross element of air and it exists as a vibrating medium in *akasa* or ether. Then, in a similar way, there is motion in the atoms of water and the production of the gross element of water which exists in the air and is moved by it. Next, the atoms of earth are set in motion and compose the gross element of earth which exists in water. Then, from the atoms of fire arises, in a similar way, the gross element of fire, which exists with its luminosity in the gross water. After this and by the mere thought of God, there appears the embryo of a world (*brahmaṇḍa*) out of the atoms of fire and earth. God animates that embryo with *Brahma*, the world-soul. To *Brahma* God entrusts the work of creation in its details and with proper adjustment between merit and happiness, and demerit and misery. The created world is maintained in existence for a long time and then it is destroyed by God to provide a way of escape from suffering for all living beings for some time. When in the course of time *Brahma* gives up his body, there appears in God a desire to destroy the world. With this, the *adrsta* or unseen moral deserts of individual souls operate as a destructive force. It is in contact with such souls that there is motion in the constituent atoms of their body and senses. On account of this motion there is disjunction of the atoms and consequent disintegration of the body and the senses. Similarly, there is motion in the atoms of the elemental earth and its disintegration through the cessation of their conjunction. In this way there is destruction of the physical elements of earth,

water, fire and air, one after the other. Thus all composite physical things, the four elements, all bodies and sense-organs are destroyed, and what remain are the atoms in isolation and the eternal substances of *akasa*, time, space, minds, and souls with their merit and demerit. This is the state of world's destruction which continues till a fresh process of creation is started by the will of God.¹

The Sankhya theory of the world is, on the face of it, atheistic. Here the creation of the world is not guided by any intelligent being like God, but is a natural process of development out of *prakṛti* or primal matter when it comes in contact with *puruṣa* or the selves. The evolution of the world, no doubt, serves to realise the moral and spiritual ends of our life, and obeys the law of karma in general. But this is not due to the activity of any self, human or divine. It is brought about by *prakṛti* with its immanent, but unconscious teleology. Creation does not mean the production of the world which did not exist before in any form. It is just the manifestation of what was previously unmanifested. Hence we are to say that the world was in an unmanifested form in its ultimate material cause, called *prakṛti* or *pradhana*. *Prakṛti* is the unmanifested cosmic energy in which the three *guṇas* or the ultimate constituents of the world, namely, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*, are held in equilibrium. With the contact between *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, there is a disturbance of the equilibrium and a tremendous commotion in the infinite bosom of *prakṛti*, in which each of the *guṇas* tries to preponderate over the rest. There is, then, a gradual differentiation and integration of the three *guṇas*, and, as a result of their combination in different proportions, the various objects of the world are produced. From *prakṛti* arises, first,

1. Cf. *Padārthadharma-saṅgraha*, pp. 29-35; *Nyaya-kandali*, pp. 30-34; *Kumārāraṇya*, 1-3.

mahat or buddhi which, in one aspect, is the great germ of the universe and, in another aspect, is the intellect in individual beings. The second product of prakṛti is ahaṁkāra or the ego which arises directly out of mahat, the first manifestation, and makes the self to think of itself as 'I' and of objects as 'mine.' It is the principle of individuation which differentiates the homogeneous cosmic energy into distinct and separate centres of existence. From ahaṁkāra as predominated by sattva arise the five organs of perception (jñānendriya), the five organs of action (karmendriya) and the mind (manas). From the same ahaṁkāra, when dominated by tamas, arise the five subtle elements or tanmatras of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. Ahaṁkāra as dominated by rajas is concerned in both these cases and supplies the energy needed for the change of sattva and tamas into their respective products. The tanmatras are not material atoms, but the infra-atomic essences or potentialities out of which the five gross elements arise in the following way. From the essence of sound (śabdātānmatra) is produced ākāśa with the quality of sound which is perceived by the ear. From the essence of touch (sparsātānmatra), combined with that of sound, arises air with the qualities of sound and touch. Out of the essence of colour (rūpātānmatra) mixed with those of sound and touch, there arises light or fire with the qualities of sound, touch and colour. From the essence of taste (rasātānmatra) combined with those of sound, touch and colour is produced the element of water with the properties of sound, touch, colour and taste. The essence of smell (gandhātānmatra) combined with the other four gives rise to earth which has all the five qualities of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. From the combination of these physical elements (mahabhūtas) arise all complex physical objects including the gross and subtle body. But these are not regarded as separate

principles, because they are only compounds of other principles. The history of the world is a play of twenty-five principles, of which prakṛti is the first and the five gross elements are the last. But it is not complete in itself and has a necessary reference to the world of selves as the witnesses or enjoyers thereof. It is not a mechanical system which has no rational purposes behind it. On the other hand, it serves the most fundamental ends of the moral and spiritual life. In the Sāṅkhya, the evolution of prakṛti into a world of objects makes for a moral order in which individual selves may realise themselves and attain the highest end of life, namely, liberation.¹

In the Yoga system we have a theistic theory of the world in which God is regarded as the Supreme Person who is distinct from all other persons and is the Supreme Ruler of the world. The creation of the world is due to the association between puruṣa and prakṛti, and its dissolution to the dissociation of the one from the other. But these cannot be effected by individual selves who are limited in power and knowledge. God is the perfect and omniscient Being who brings about the association or dissociation between puruṣa and prakṛti, according as the adṛṣṭa of the individual selves requires the creation or destruction of the world. Without the guidance of God, prakṛti cannot produce just that order of the world which is suited to the moral education and final emancipation of individual selves. The process of evolution or dissolution of the world is explained in the Yoga in the same way as in the allied system of the Sāṅkhya.²

In the Mīmāṃsā philosophy the creation of the world is explained by the law of *karma* that works independently of God. It believes in the realities of the

1. Cf. Sāṅkhya-sūtra, I, 71; 2, 23-45; *Kaṭha and Karmasūtra*, 27-47. *Pratimānubhāṣa*, I, 64-74; 2, 10-32.

2. Cf. Yoga-sūtra, *Bhāṣya* and *Pratī*, I, 23-25; 2, 2, 32, 45; 3, 45.

world which contains diverse physical objects including living bodies, souls, heaven, hell and deities to whom sacrifices should be performed. The formation of the world is guided by the law of *karma* which independently regulates the atoms to build up just the kind of world in which souls may reap the consequences of their past deeds. There is no necessity for admitting the existence of God to explain the origin of the world. In this respect the Mīmāṃsā agrees with the Sāṃkhya and propounds an atheistic theory of the world.¹

Let us now consider the Vedānta theory or theories of the world. The Vedānta is the cream of the Vedic culture on its speculative side and is perhaps the ruling creed of the Hindus even to-day. There are two main schools of the Vedānta, namely, the Advaita and the Viśiṣṭādvaita. Connected with these two we find two different theories of the world which we propose to explain separately.

The Advaita Vedānta gives us a monistic theory of the world. It holds that there is only one reality called Brahman who is pure existence, consciousness and bliss. This reality or Brahman has no difference and plurality within or outside it. It has not even any qualities or characters to distinguish it from other things. It is perfectly indeterminate, pure being which is of the nature of self-revealing consciousness and blissful existence. It follows that the world of many things and beings or individual souls is not ultimately real, but a mere appearance *like* an object in dream or illusion. There is in Brahman some inscrutable power to produce the appearance of a world of many objects in the same way in which a magician makes one coin appear as many. The origin of the world lies in this magical power of Brahman, called *māya*. Brahman associated with *māya* is called *Īśvara* or God who is the creator of the world.

1. Cf. Śaṅkaratīkṣa, chapter on *Āndhama*: *Prabhaṅga-vijaya*.

Maya as a power of Brahman is indistinguishable from Him, just as the burning power of fire is from fire itself. It is by this that Brahman, the Great Magician, conjures up the world-show with all its wonderful objects. *Maya* has the double function of concealing (*avarana*) Brahman from our view and distorting (*viksepa*) Him into the appearance of a world in our mind. It is neither real nor unreal, but indescribable. Just as a magician's power of producing illusion does not deceive him, but only ignorant people who cannot see through it, so *maya*, the magical power of creation, does not affect or deceive Brahman. For Him, *maya* is only the will to create the appearance of a world. For ignorant people like us, who are deceived by it and see many objects instead of one Brahman, *maya* is an illusion-producing ignorance. In this respect *maya* is also called *avidya* or *ajñāna* and is conceived as having the double function of concealing the real nature of Brahman and making Him appear as the world. In so far as *maya* positively produces the appearance of a world, it is called positive ignorance (*bhava-rupa ajñāna*); and in so far as the world has no beginning, *maya* is also said to be beginningless (*anadi*). But just as for a discerning man who sees through the trick, the magician's wand produces no illusion, so for the wise few who are not deceived by the world-show and who perceive in it nothing but Brahman, there is no illusion of the world, nor any illusion-producing *maya*. Brahman to them is not, therefore, the wielder of *maya* at all.¹

The creation of the world, then, is to be understood in the sense of the appearance of the world out of Brahman through His power of *maya*. Brahman is both the material and efficient cause of the world in so far as He is the only reality or substance underlying the phenomenal world and has the magical power of pro-

1. Cf. *Śaṅkara-bhāṣya on Brahma-sūtra*.

jecting the appearance of a world. Brahman by his magical power of *māya* becomes all this that we call the world. But the modification of Brahman into the world is not real, but only apparent. While the real modification of any substance into another, as of milk into curd, is called *parinama*, apparent or illusory modification of a substance, as of the rope into the snake, is called *vivarta*. The *advaita* theory of creation is, therefore, known as *vivartavada* as distinguished from the *Sāṅkhya* theory of evolution (by real modification of *prakṛti*) which is called *parinama-vada*. It should be interpreted as a seeming evolution of the world out of Brahman through its power of *māya*. In this process of evolution, at first there arise out of Brahman the five subtle elements, in the order—*ākāśa* or ether, *vāyu* or air, *agni* or fire, *ap* or water, *kṣiti* or earth. These five are then mixed up together in five different ways to give rise to the gross elements of those names. Each gross element is produced by the combination of the subtle elements, in the proportion of half of that element and one-eighth of each of the other four. This process is known as *pañcīkaraṇa* or combination of the five. Again, from the *sāttvika* part of each of the five subtle elements of *ākāśa* etc., arises each of the five senses of hearing etc.; from a combination of the *sāttvika* parts of the same subtle elements arise *buddhi* and *manas*; from the *rajasā* parts of the subtle elements arise severally the five organs of action; and from a combination of the same parts arise the five *prāṇas* or vital breaths. The subtle body of man consists of the five senses, five organs of action, five *prāṇas* and *buddhi* and *manas* which arise out of the subtle elements. The gross body, as well as all gross objects of nature is produced out of the gross elements which arise by the mixture of the five subtle ones.¹

1. Cf. *Loc. cit.*, and *Sadananda, Vedāntasūtra*, 17-45.

The evolution of the world out of Brahman through *maya* is thus a process of apparent change of the subtle to the gross. Three stages are sometimes distinguished in this process of evolution. Brahman, the unchanging reality, cannot be said to be undergoing evolution. All change and evolution, therefore, belong to the sphere of *maya*. It is *maya*, the creative power, which at first remains unmanifested, then becomes differentiated into subtle objects, and then into the gross ones. Brahman conceived as the possessor of the undifferentiated *maya* is named *Isvara* and described as omniscient and omnipotent. Brahman possessed of subtly differentiated *maya* is called *Hiranyagarbha* (also *Sutrātma* and *Prāṇa*). God in this aspect would be the totality of all subtle objects. Brahman possessed of *maya* differentiated further into gross objects is called *Vaiśvanara* (also *Virat*). This aspect of God is the totality of all gross objects including the *jivas* or individuals. The entire process of evolution of the world, however, is, according to the Advaita Vedānta, a seeming change of the unchanging, an apparent modification of the immutable, and an imaginary superimposition (*adhyāsa*) of the world on Brahman.

In the Viśiṣṭādvaita school of the Vedānta we have the theory of qualified monism. According to it, there is one ultimate reality, namely, Brahman. But Brahman is not, as the advaitin thinks, a distinctionless, indeterminate reality, but the Supreme Person who contains the world of individual souls and material objects as parts of Himself. Brahman is a unity possessed of (*viśiṣṭa*) real parts, the conscious and the unconscious. Within Brahman, the all-inclusive God, there are unconscious matter (*acit*) and finite spirits (*cit*), both of which are uncreated and eternal. The first is the source of the material objects and as such is called *prakṛti*, the root or origin of the world of objects. This *prakṛti* is,

unlike that of the Sāṃkhya, a part of God and controlled by God, just as the human body is controlled from within by the human soul. During the state of dissolution (*pralaya*) this primal unconscious matter or *prakṛti* remains in a latent (*śukṣma*) and undifferentiated (*avibhakta*) form. God creates out of this the world of diverse objects in accordance with the merits and demerits of the souls in the world prior to the last dissolution. Impelled by the omnipotent will of God, the undifferentiated subtle matter gradually becomes transformed into three kinds of subtle elements—fire, water and earth. These differentiated elements manifest also the three kinds of qualities known as *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. Gradually the three subtle elements become mixed up together and give rise to all gross objects which we perceive in the material world. In every object of the world there is a mixture of the three elements. This process is known as *trivṛtkarana* or triplication.¹

According to the Viśiṣṭādvaita Vedānta, then, creation is not an apparent evolution of the world out of God through its power of *māyā*. It is a real fact, and the created world is as real as Brahman. But the objects of the world have no independent existence of their own. In all of them there is the same Brahman, on which they are dependent for existence, just as all golden ornaments are dependent on gold. It is no doubt true that God has been described in the ancient scriptures as the wielder of a magical power called *māyā*. But this does not mean that the world is only an appearance or illusion like the one produced by a magician. Rather, it means that the inscrutable power by which God creates the world is as wonderful as that of the magician. God has in Him a real power of creating this wonderful world (*vicitrārtha-sargakāri śakti*) which is, therefore, a real

1. Cf. Śrībhāṣya, 1.1.1-4; 1.4.8-10; 2.1.15. *passim*.

manifestation of His unmanifested causal nature or creative power.¹

These are the chief theories of the world which one finds in Hinduism. If we add to these the Carvaka theory that the world is the product of the mechanical fortuitous combination of the material elements by themselves without any conscious purpose or intelligent guidance, then we may say that Hinduism presents the main types of the theories of creation that have appeared in the history of philosophy and religion. But in conclusion we are to observe that all theories of creation leave us as unconvinced as before. In spite of all that has been said or done by philosophers or religious leaders of the world, the creation of the world remains a mystery for us. There are two problems that suggest themselves to the human mind as to the world. The first is: What is the ultimate ground, substance, or reality *logically presupposed* by the world? The second is: *Why or how* the world originates from what is accepted as the ultimate? The solution of the first is the primary business of philosophy and most of the great philosophers of the world address themselves to this problem. By a critical examination of the world of experienced facts, they try to find out what is logically presupposed by it and accept it as the ultimate reality. In accomplishing this task reasoning or logic is their chief instrument and the conclusions reached by them are rational and logically justifiable. But the solution of the second problem is the business of mythology which starts with God or some other ultimate reality and gives an imaginary account of the origin of the world on the analogy of nature's or man's productive or reproductive activities. Imagination is the chief instrument that is available in this sphere, and no logical rigour can be expected in its work. The mythological explanation of

1. See *ibid.* 1-3-2.

the world has always been a pastime for the human mind in all lands, as all the scriptures and legends of the world would show. Sometimes it is found intermingled also with philosophical speculation. This lends it an air of reasonableness which it would not otherwise possess. This is more or less true of the different theories of creation one finds in Hinduism. It is in this light that the Hindu theories of the world, especially the Vedānta theory, should be apprehended and appreciated.

Dr. Satish Chandra Chatterjee.

THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLE IN INDIAN CULTURE

If we look at the history of India throughout the ages, two points stand out crystal clear. The first is that India never neglected the materialistic aspect of life. In fact, till about the eighteenth century, we find that as regards materialistic achievements India was not only not behind, but was in certain respects more advanced than the contemporary world. The fame of India's wealth and luxuries had spread far and wide. Whichever power came to control India's foreign trade rose in respect of wealth, prestige and power, and it is doubtful whether, but for her social, military and diplomatic backwardness, she would at all have fallen an easy prey to fortune-hunting commercial companies from the West.

The second fact in India's history is that the first place in her life had always been given to spirituality. As already said, this did not mean that the materialistic aspect of life was neglected. On the contrary, the fact that spirituality was given its due and proper place in her society was one of the reasons which enabled India to make her mark in materialistic achievements as well, in a very outstanding manner. The reason why the first place was given to spirituality was that, as Swami Vivekananda has stressed, our leaders of thought in ancient India had plumbed life to the depths, had compared and contrasted materialism and spirituality, had realized the utter hollowness of the purely materialistic life and the supreme superiority of spirituality. They therefore showed the way in expressing preference for spirituality, and in making the current of Indian life

flow mainly through spiritual channels. Their lead has been followed in this country through thousands of years. As Swami Vivekananda once remarked, we cannot now make the current of Indian life flow back in order to make it speed through another channel.

Excepting those who are confirmed atheists or too worldly, however high, mighty or wealthy a person may be, he has always bent his head low before spiritual teachers. Even the most worldly of pursuits and matters have been given a religious twist and turn, a religious tinge and interpretation in India, so that however worldly a man may be, his worldliness is used as an aid, not as hindrance, to spiritual development.

The nineteenth century produced great religious and social reformers in India. Their appearance culminated in the birth of Sri Ramkrishna and Swami Vivekananda. Processes were set on foot in the depths of the nation's soul which, inspite of the most adverse circumstances, produced such vitality, energy and cohesion as to ultimately enable the yoke of foreign rule to be thrown off before the supremacy of the British could complete even two hundred years in this Sub-Continent.

Vivekananda emphasized in speech after speech that if we want to strengthen India in any sphere we have to strengthen her in spirituality. The history of India of about the last half a century bears eloquent testimony to the profound truth of his observations. The political awakening of India would not have been possible but for the spiritual awakening which preceded it.

We thus have closed one brilliant chapter of our recent national history, and we are about to open another more glorious chapter.

Any keen observer of contemporary affairs cannot but fail to note that the world in and outside India has, in this age, been passing through swift changes at a pace probably undreamt of by any precursor of human

events. God seems to have ordained that in this period of man's history he should advance at a terrific pace. And he truly has been advancing with terrific speed. The progress in the mechanical and technological field has been remarkable, while that on the economic, political, and psychological, side has fallen behind; the consequent maladjustment and dislocation has given rise to a tremendous amount of discontent and misery.

Any man or nation that can help people all over the world to pass through the present changes with the least misery, and to make the social, economic, political and psychological adjustments that are necessary in this age with a view to making man's life happier and more peaceful, will be conferring a lasting benefit upon mankind. By her faith in and realisation of the spiritual unity of mankind, India is the best fitted for the great task. No doubt the contemporary problems which face us outside India, and also those within this country, are tremendous, but if we remember well the ultimate fountain from which we derive our individual and our national strength, and apply ourselves to discharging our tasks in the contemporary world with the conviction that the source of all power is behind us—in fact that in discharging our task we shall be but carrying out the wishes of that Power, no power on earth can possibly resist us, and there is no doubt that the utmost success will attend our efforts for the advancement of the people within and outside India. Let us therefore with all our efforts again strengthen India in her spirituality, and apply ourselves to our task with the requisite vigour. The result will be that all the intricate problems which face mankind to-day, within and outside India, will appear easy of solution and will ultimately be solved in a manner which cannot but give satisfaction to humanity all the world over.

Sri Shri Chandra Dutt.

THE MESSAGE OF THE VEDAS

We are passing through a critical phase of human civilization. There is no peace and there is no joy. Life is full of problems. The world is in chaos. There must be something wrong—radically wrong in the world-affairs. Our politics, economics, industry and science are rich with wonderful achievements no doubt, but still there is no harmony and beauty in life, there is no hope and light in human activities and there is no symmetry and sweetness in our daily experiences. All the world over men of character and feeling are endeavouring to get rid of the present chaos so that humanity may be saved, so that the paths for a richer and nobler life may be opened for the entire mankind.

In the darkness and chaos, free India can send her message of the spiritual life for the acceptance of the sorrow-stricken world. The Vedas are the immortal sources of our inspiration and culture and we must look towards the inspired Rishis for our guidance and light.

We must find from their treasure-house a new art of life which will restore to the bewildered individual of our age his integrity and his wholeness. The life of the individual has its true meaning and significance only when it can aid in making the life of every living-being nobler and more beautiful. In this task the Vedic culture will be of very great help to the men of enterprise and idealism who aspire to build a richer, a better and a nobler world. The Vedic Rishis laid great stress on sacrifice. The life of the individual must be a life of sacrifice from his birth to his death. What is the inner meaning of this sacrifice?

The keynote of sacrifice lies in service. The great God sacrificed Himself in order to produce this world and the world is daily sustained by His sacrifice. The cycle of life cannot go on unless there be mutual service and co-operation.

We should realise that the whole of our life is bound with the existence of other human beings. We take food that others have grown, wear clothes that others have woven, live in houses that others have constructed. We are what we are not because of our individuality but rather as members of the great human society. Hence we should live so that our feelings, thoughts and actions are directed towards the good of our fellow-beings. The Vedic conception of sacrifice develops this central idea that true life is something entirely different from the numerous selfish activities in which we are daily engaged, that we should not immerse ourselves merely in efforts that satisfy our greed and avarice but that we must live a life, dedicated to the cause of God wherein we should find a harmonious and complete extension of the Self.

The present economic system is bad because there is no giving and taking. Our decadence is due to the fact that the development of industry and machinery has not made our life happy and sweet and that it has not brought the desired leisure for life of culture and sweetness. It has made the struggle for existence more acute and more severe, so that we have no time to experience the joys of life. For bringing back of the health of the community, for the material *scarcity* of the individual, for raising the standard of life, a planned scheme of production and distribution is necessary.

But to do this, a new outlook is necessary, and the intolerable hardships of unequal distribution of property can be mitigated, if people develop the social conscience which directs them not to live for themselves alone but to live for the community. The White Yajurveda is a book

of rituals. After describing the methods of the different sacrifices it ends with an Upanishad which is known as the Isha Upanishad. It begins thus:—

Envelope everything in this world with the joy of God. Live by sacrifice, eat after giving others and do not covet.

This is a mantra pregnant with suggestiveness and thoughts. The conception of Godhead in India is very high. *Satyam Jnanam Ahantam Brahma*, God is truth, God is wisdom, God is infinite Santam, Sivam Adwaitam. There is the highest peace in God, there is the highest good in God and there is the supreme unity of all things in God. The aspirant after spiritual life must therefore not lead a life of passive contemplation away from the battle-field of life but he must act and act in the living presence of the Eternal Soul, by dedicating all he does to the Eternal Being. This dedicated life is a life of service to all sentient beings and sacrifice is nothing but the dedication. In the Yajurveda, there is a sacrifice which is known as "sarva medha yajna." It is a sacrifice for the well-being and prosperity of all. Let me quote a few of the beautiful mantras which will give the reader's an idea of the noble conceptions that lie behind sacrifice. This sacrifice for universal success was performed last of all and the sacrificer used to leave his home and retire to the wilderness for the rest of life after performance of this noble sacrifice.

"Oh Savitar, thou art loved by all men. Do come to our assembly to gladden all our people. We offer thee our heart-felt devotion through lively hymns and sacred food. Thou art youthful and may our songs make thee bright and brilliant so that thou wouldst illumine the men of the world. R. 33-34.

* * * *

" Oh Savitar! thou art the first of the holy Gods.
 Thou sendest them the noblest gift of
 immortality. Thereafter thou givest the same
 to men and thus conferest existence to
 mankind—thou openest life succeeding life
 R. 33-54.

We must pray with the Vedic seers for universal success and prosperity. Inspired with that intoxicated joy and amusement at the beauty and grandeur of this world which made them ask for a life of hundred autumns, we must crave with them for a life of joy from which activity draws its spiritual sustenance. We must ask for a life in which we can engage ourselves in actions and deeds and in thoughts and feelings which elevate us from the realism of the desire to the realism of service. But this life of service and renunciation is no idle life of escape from the concrete realities of the world. While saying with the Buddha, " Let all the sins of the world fall on me and the world be saved," we must acclaim with glory our life in this world. Life is sacred. It is the supreme value to which all other values are subordinate.

We must sing with Sudas:—

"O Indra, we seek thy friendship—thy close intimacy. Lead us by the path of Truth and virtue. We take shelter in thee. Free us from all grief and pain by the powers of the Holy Law. Bend the bows of others so that we may be victorious. Teach us that secret by which we may drink the milk of Mother Earth in thousand streams. Lead us to the exhaustless udder of the great cow for thou givest all that the devotees seek for." R. 10-133.

This and other passages in the hymns show conclusively that the Vedic seers did not despise this world. They loved life in its intensity and did not turn their attention away from it. Life is a blessing and we can

make it happy by living in tune with the Infinite. This complete spiritualisation of life radiates happiness all around but it also elevates human life in its daily routine to the plane of an art. The Vedic philosophy is, therefore, nowhere a philosophy of asceticism. It preaches a new cult of action and devotion which exalts all the energies of the individuals. Life is not a bed of roses; obstacles and difficulties do come but if rightly approached, they become a valuable source of health and strength to any individual or to any society. India has survived through her dark days by remaining faithful to her moral and spiritual traditions treasured in the Veda. India has overcome the heavy storms that have broken by the spiritual fervour. Now that there is the dawn of a new life in India, we must pray for energy and vigour, joy and brightness, light and happiness, just as the Vedic sages did. In the service of life we must bring in beauty and grace.

Vasistha is a well-known seer. His songs would inspire us with new faith and new strength. He sings:—

“O, Indra, O Varuna, grant us wealth and happiness that knows no bounds—give goodness for the life of service and sacrifice. Make our people and family strong and noble. May we conquer our foes who are evil-spirited so that we can be steadfast in performing rites and rituals.”

* * * *

“He knows no fear, has no trouble, gets no misfortune and feels no woe whom you, Indra-Varuna grace with your favour. He suffers no injury from any mortal man, in whose sacrifice you do visit and enjoy. Come to us, benign gods, with your divine light and grace. Listen to our songs and find favour with our hymns. We seek for your friendship, for your communion and favouring grace; you are the heroes of the people, be our champion

in our weary battles. Be our strength and fortification when different people seek for your favour. We invoke you for sons and progeny. May Indra, Varuna, Mitra and Aryaman vouchsafe us great glory. Let our achievements be noble and far-spreading. Give us shelter. We bow down to the heavenly light of Aditi, the Infinite who is the keeper of Law. We sing hymns in praise of Savitar, the great God." R. 7-82.

Let India in her new freedom seek for that glory that widens from day to day and attains to the loftiest possibilities of human endeavours.

The Vedic culture is a cult of Truth, Beauty and Sweetness. In a serene moment of our life, we feel a strange awe and delight which come out of the Divine and invade the life of the soul. This realisation, if it comes, inspires and moulds every detail of our life.

We must revive this lost love of our fore-fathers. The essence of that culture is based on courage and faith. We must have the plenitude of life which would establish us at a new vital level from which we would go forward and forward with ever newer aspirations. Life can never be perfect here on this side of the grave—but we can still make life sublime by our constant search for Truth, Beauty and Goodness. In that holy quest nobody should be left behind. There should be no isolation, no barrier and no privileges. Ours is the first age in history when friendly and understanding intercourse between the different races of the world has become a reality. We should no longer live in fear or hatred of one another. We should call the people of the world to the great Festivity of Human Unity in the words of Rishi Sanbanana:—

"Assemble together. Speak together, let your minds and hearts be one. Let your ideals be the same. Common the assembly, common

the purpose and resolve so that you may all happily agree and prosper." R. 10-191.

It is a pleasure to note that six thousand year back, a Vedic bard had the valuable conception of human unity and purpose. Modern world needs peace and international amity so that there would be opportunity all over the globe for mankind to develop their creative energies. Nationalism must go. Internationalism must be the creed and religion of all intellectuals.

We conclude with the Vedic prayer for Peace and Blessings. "Let the wind blow sweet, the rivers pour forth sweets. Let us live in the path of Right and Law. Let the plants be sweet for us. Sweet be the night and sweet the dawns. Sweet be the dust that flows over the earth. Sweet be our father Heaven to us. Sweet be the lordly trees of the forest. Sweet be the bright sun and sweet be our milch-cows."

Let sweetness and plentitude come on earth and let there be never-ending happiness in fullness of life out of our homage to the Vedas.

Dr. Matilal Das

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COMMENCEMENT OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY*

BY

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THE VEDANTA AS PURNADVAITAVADA

If a man asks: What is the richest gem in the vast treasure-house of Indian culture?, I need have no hesitation in replying—"The Vedanta." Yes, the Vedanta is indeed the most precious gem in India's cultural heritage. It represents at once the highest flight of speculative adventure and the profoundest depth of spiritual intuition. It sums up the inspired wisdom of the Vedas and the Upanisads which constitute the fountain-source of all the currents that go to swell the mighty stream of Indian culture. The Vedanta is indeed the dominant spirit, the keynote of the profoundly luminous utterances of our ancient Truth-seers. It is in the Vedanta that a man glimpses the secret of the remarkable power of synthesis inherent in Indian culture and of its eternal freshness of outlook. Swami Vivekananda did therefore the right thing in preaching to the West the message of the Vedanta as India's most precious gift to the world.

But then, the message of the Vedanta has been variously interpreted. It has been interpreted by Sankar as Kevaladvaitavada or Unqualified Monism. This means that in ultimate analysis the one ineffable and indeterminable Spirit (Nirguna Brahman) is alone real, the world of multitudinous existence being only a passing show, endowed with no more than a kind of objective unreality. The Vedanta has again been interpreted by Ramanuja as Visistadvaitavada or Qualified Monism. This means that ultimate reality is the one all-comprehensive Spirit (Saguna Brahman), which is qualified by inconscient Nature and finite spirits which are essentially adjectival to the former. Then again the Vedanta has been interpreted as Dvaitadvaitavada or Non-Dualism-In-Dualism by Nimbarka. This means that ultimate reality is one all-embracing Spirit, of which the world and finite

individuality (Jagat and Jiva) are both vital moments or component factors such as may be said to be related to the supreme Spirit by the dual relation of difference and non-difference. Furthermore, the Vedānta has been interpreted by Madhva as Dvaitavāda. This means that an eternal relation of ontological difference sets the supreme Spirit above the plurality of finite selves, although they are closely similar in respect of their essential nature. The aforesaid theories are the chief among the traditional modes of interpretation of the Vedānta. One reason behind this variety of interpretation most probably is that the undivided light of ineffable experience is distorted into a strange multiplicity of self-imagings, when reflected into the unequal surface of the human understanding. Another reason is provided by the fact that there are different levels of spiritual self-realisation to which the different systems of thought naturally correspond. Now, every such system of thought has an importance of its own, and does also achieve, after a fashion, a synthesis of its own. In doing justice to all the aspects of multiform experience different systems of thought lay especial emphasis upon different facets of the one undivided Truth. Every such thought-structure has a unique importance in solving the peculiar problems of life and experience presented either by a particular level of consciousness, or by a particular cross-section of human existence, or by a particular period of time. In modern times, Sri Aurobindo, the greatest exponent of Indian culture, has given us an interpretation of the Vedānta in a spirit of all-comprehensive synthesis. He has tried to restore the original teaching of the Upanisads and the Gita in such a way that the apparently conflicting truths of all the traditional interpretations of the Vedānta are harmoniously blended in an integrated Truth-vision. The Vedānta as interpreted by him may be described as *Brahmadvaitavāda* or *Integral Non-Dualism*. We shall

attempt here to give an outline, in briefest possible terms, of the original teaching of the Upanisads or the message of the Vedānta as interpreted by Sri Aurobindo.

Purnadvaitavāda, as we understand it, is such a comprehensively synthetic interpretation of the Upanisads that it incorporates into itself the truths of all the traditional systems of Vedāntic thought. And, more important still, the type of synthesis embodied in Purnadvaitavāda, has a special significance for the present day crisis of human civilization. It shows the way to a reconciliation between knowledge and action (*jñāna* and *karma*) in such a way as alone can enable us to meet the challenge of our times. It is the basis and background of the art of living in dynamic identification with the Infinite,—the art of living in such a way that the discords and disharmonies of collective human living can be decisively eliminated. It emphasises the great truth that an integral realisation of the supreme Spirit is fraught with dynamic possibilities towards an ideal re-construction of human existence on the basis of spiritual harmony.

Purnadvaitavāda maintains that ultimate reality is one all-comprehensive Spirit with an infinite richness of content. The supreme Spirit is undivided, not because it is incapable of self-division, but because it remains unaffected even by endless self-divisions and self-variations. An adequate comprehension of the nature of the Spirit in its full integrality reveals that it has three fundamental modes of existence or poises of being, namely, supra-cosmic transcendence, cosmic universality, and unique individuality. In its aspect of supra-cosmic transcendence, the Spirit is ineffable and indeterminable Super-consciousness (*Paratpara Para-Brahman*). The concept of *Saccidananda* (Existence-Knowledge-Bliss) is just the nearest rational approach to the supremely ineffable Spirit; or, in other words, *Saccidananda* is the very first manifestation of Brahman in intelligible terms. In its

aspect of cosmic universality, the Spirit is the all-originating, all-sustaining and all-consummating principle of consciousness (Iswara). In its aspect of individuality, the Spirit is the principle of infinitely diversified self-vision, self-enjoyment and self-manifestation (Jivatman). The supreme Spirit is all these at once; not an aggregation of them, but a super-organic unity, an ineffable one-in-all or all-in-one. Brahman, Iswara and Jivatman are equally real and eternal terms of its self-existence. Iswaratva and Jivatva are not to be regarded as illusory super-impositions on the locus of Brahman conceived as one undifferentiated and undifferentenced consciousness. They are as much real factors in the life of the supreme Spirit (Para-Brahman) as the supra-cosmic Silence (Nirguna Brahman) is.

RECONCILIATION OF ADVAITAVADA, VISISTADVAITAVADA AND DVAITAVADA

Purnadvaitavada points out that all the three principal systems of Vedantic thought, to wit, Advaitavada, Visistadvaitavada and Dvaitava, represent very important metaphysical truths and correspond to different levels of concrete spiritual realisation. It is, therefore, a complete mistake to look upon them as mutually conflicting logical schemes. Sri Ramkrishna, the great sage of Dakshineswara, got at the secret of this supreme harmony in the depth of his spiritual realisation. It was however not for him to make an intellectual presentation of the content of his realisation. The Purnadvaitavada of Sri Aurobindo provides the necessary philosophical basis of a grand reconciliation. It shows how the apparent irreconcilables of metaphysical thinking can be reconciled on a deeply rational basis.

It is a fundamental affirmation of all seeds of truth that ultimate reality is spiritual in character. Now, what is the essential nature of the Spirit? Sri Aurobindo is in perfect agreement with Vedantic teaching that the Spirit

is in its original purity in the nature of unitary and indivisible consciousness (*advaita, nirvibhaga cetana*). It is an endless wealth of potentiality concentrated beyond the reach of conceptual understanding. It may be symbolically represented as an extensionless mathematical point, for which reason the Tantras describe it as "Bindu." This Bindu is *cidanandarupam*, pure consciousness and pure bliss. Now, bliss (*anandam*) in its full plenitude and infinity has a dual aspect. It includes delight of mutable becoming as well as the delight of immutable being; it includes the joy of creative self-manifestation as well as the joy of ecstatic self-absorption or rapturous self-communion. It is the delight of mutable becoming or creative self-expression which is responsible for the cosmic outflow *i.e.*, for the emergence of the endless Many out of the limitless One,—for the unceasing stream of creation irrepressibly flowing from the inexhaustible Fount of all being. Let us for the moment consider only that part of self-expression of the Spirit which is not in any way tainted by *Avidya* or Ignorance,—which is not in any way deformed or distorted by the action of Mind which is the nodus of Ignorance. Sri Aurobindo holds that the Spirit has, broadly speaking, three eternally real supramental forms of self-expression. These are all perfectly luminous, and entirely free from any limitation or obscuration. By virtue of the expansive urge of its creative delight, the consciousness-point (Bindu), which is spaceless and timeless concentration of the Spirit in itself, obtains a vast and limitless self-expansion or self-extension which is characterized throughout by perfect equality of concentration. Bindu here develops into *Sindhu* (an ocean of consciousness). It is an infinitely self-extended identity-consciousness (*Vijnana*), "an equal self-extension of *Saccidananda* all-comprehending, all-possessing, all-constituting" (*The Life Divine*, Vol. I, p. 222), without there

being as yet any sign of individualization. When the reflection of this primary poise of the Supermind falls upon our stilled and purified self, we lose all sense of individuality and realize the truth inherent in Advaitavada. But Advaitavada does not surely represent the whole truth, because there are other eternally real supramental poises of the Spirit too.

At the second stage of supramental self-manifestation, the Spirit differentiates itself into an infinite plurality of individual soul-forms. This is a sort of practical differentiation, which involves no ontological difference. Such practical differentiation is an expression of the delight of self-manifestation of the One in the Many. Every individual soul-form is here fully conscious of its essential identity with other soul-forms and with the all-embracing One. "The universal Divine would know all soul-forms as itself and yet establish a different relation with each separately and in each with all the others." (The Life Divine, Vol. I. p. 223). When the reflection of this particular poise of the Spirit falls on our purified mind, we realize the truth inherent in Visistadvaitavada. Visistadvaitavada also cannot be said to represent the whole truth; it commits a mistake by exaggerating its own particular truth into the whole truth, ignoring other supramental poises of the Spirit. While emphasising the play of the One in the Many, it shuts its eyes to the ineffable self-poise of the One beyond the Many.

Thirdly, there is another poise of being of the Spirit, in which it undergoes an extreme modification of its fundamental unity and gets in a way involved in its countless individual forms. At this stage individualization reaches the utmost limit, and every individual soul-form functions as if it were entirely separate from other individual soul-forms and also from the universal Divine. The basic and essential unity of the Spirit is in no way abrogated by this free play of differentiation. The Spirit

is indeed so indivisible that even countless divisions cannot divide it. On the contrary multiform self-division is necessary for the full self-realization of the basic unity. Even at this third stage, there is neither any actual separation of the different soul-forms, nor any false suggestion in them about actual separation. As a form of supramental self-expression, it is entirely free from any trace of ignorance and falsehood. There is only an insistence here on "the joy of the differentiation as necessary to the fullness of the joy of the unity." When the reflection of this particular poise of the Spirit falls upon our purified mind we realize the truth inherent in Dvaitavada. We realize that there is a sort of fundamental blissful dualism in unity—no longer unity qualified by a subordinate dualism—between the individual Divine and its universal source, with all the consequences that would accrue from the maintenance and operation of such a dualism. But Dvaitavada as a system of thought goes wrong in exaggerating the playful pragmatic dualism of the Divine into an ontological dualism by ignoring the absolute all-comprehensiveness of the Spirit. When the Spirit is realized in its full integrality, it is found that Advaitavada, Viśiṣṭadvaitavada, and Dvaitavada are all true, although none of them represents the whole truth. They are all true in so far as they endeavour to translate in terms of logical thinking three equally real poises of being—three supramental forms of self-manifestation—of the same indivisible ineffable Spirit.

CONTRIBUTION OF DVAITAVĀDA

Dvaitavada renders a signal service to spiritual thought when it points out that the true spiritual individuality of a man is not dissolved even after the attainment of full spiritual illumination. What is consumed by the fire of spiritual illumination is not the true spiritual Individual (Jīvatman) but the Ego (Aham), not the individuality of the transcendent Self but only the exclu-

sive particularity of the empirical self which is an organization of Nature (Prakṛti) for the centralization of a man's manifold experiences. A failure to distinguish between the two is responsible as much for the extreme of Illusionism on the side of knowledge as for the extreme of Individualism on the side of Ignorance. Dvaitavāda takes its stand upon an important truth when it asserts that spiritual individuality is an eternally real component of ultimate reality. But it commits a grievous mistake by construing this spiritual individuality in terms of exclusiveness of being. It is definitely wrong to suppose that different individual selves are ontologically different from each other and from the universal Divine.

CONTRIBUTION OF VISISTĀDVAITAVĀDA

Viśiṣṭādvaitavāda renders a signal service to spiritual philosophy when it points out that the true spiritual individual (Jivatman) is not ontologically separate from the supreme Lord, but is rather eternally dependent upon Him as His standing self-differentiation. The individual Self is considered dependent upon the universal Divine, just as a body is dependent upon the indwelling soul, or as a part is dependent upon the whole, or as an attribute is dependent upon the substance. The employment of these different analogies has been responsible for the growth of various sub-forms of Viśiṣṭādvaitavāda, expounded by such great thinkers as Rāmānuja, Nimbarka, Ballabha, Viṣṇuswami and others. But we do not wish to enter here into any detailed consideration of these variants of qualified Monism. The point to be noted here is that every analogy is bound to prove misleading if it is pressed too far. While Viśiṣṭādvaitavāda is perfectly right in holding that the individual Self is not real apart from God, it fails to do full justice to the essential identity of the Individual and the Absolute. The Individual Self is not a mere power or form or quality or function of the Absolute; it is the Absolute

itself in a particular poise of being. The Individual cannot be obviously be a part of the Absolute in the sense that the Absolute is only partially present in the Individual. The Absolute, which is essentially partless, is indivisibly present in the Individual. But, to be sure, the Absolute is not exhausted in any Individual Self or any collectivity of such Selves. The Absolute is at the same time indivisibly present in many Individuals. And, it must not be forgotten, the Absolute has also other poises of being than the individual poise, other modes of self-manifestation than individuation. That gives us the precise sense in which the Individual Self may be described as an eternal portion (*amsa sanātana*) of the supreme Spirit. Besides reducing individuality to a mere attribute or function of the supreme Spirit, *Viśiṣṭadvaitavāda* does also go wrong in ignoring that aspect of the Spirit which may be described as His supra-cosmic silence. A realization of this aspect of supra-cosmic silence provides the liberated soul with the experience of pure consciousness in an unequalled oneness. In other words, *Viśiṣṭadvaitavāda* is mistaken in emphasising the Saguna aspect of Brahman at the cost of the Nirguna aspect. Brahman is at once Nirguna and Saguna. And to the liberated soul it is open to choose either the state of blissful absorption in Nirguna Brahman or the state of rapturous communion with the Saguna Brahman.

CONTRIBUTION OF ADVAITAVADA

Advaitavāda takes its stand upon a very profound truth of spiritual experience. It boldly asserts that the Spirit in its deepest essence is absolute freedom and pure transcendence. It transcends all limitations of self-expression, whether cosmic or individual, and is entirely free from all fetters of self-determination. It is essentially indeterminable and logically indefinable. But what is the precise sense in which the Spirit is indefinable?

the term 'indeterminable' be understood to mean—as the current interpretation of Advaitavada understands it—incapable of real self-determination, then Advaitavada commits a grave mistake. Brahman is indeed indeterminable, but not in the sense that it is incapable of any real self-determination, but in the sense that it refuses to be limited by any or all of its diverse self-determinations. Manifested in ever so many forms, it transcends at the same time all such forms of self-manifestation and ever shines as absolute freedom. Advaitavada lays its finger upon a very important truth when it stresses the essential identity of the individual Self and supreme Spirit or Brahman. But it goes wrong in its construction of this relation of identity as unqualified non-difference. The view of Advaitavada in this respect appears to be determined by a failure to distinguish between transcendent and empirical individuality or between the spiritual individual and the ego. With the complete dissipation of avidya and the snapping of all the fetters of Karma including *prarabdha* as well as *sanchita* and *kriyamana*, what is completely liquidated is not transcendent spiritual individuality but only empirical individuality, of which exclusive particularity or egotism is the essence. The empirical individual is without doubt a product of Ignorance, but the same cannot be said of the spiritual Individual which is essentially a particular poise of being or mode of manifestation of the supreme Spirit. Identical with Brahman in essence and existence, the spiritual individual has also a unique function and form of manifestation of its own, in consequence of which it differs from other poises of being of Brahman. Finally, Advaitavada is quite right in pointing out that the world as it appears to us, i.e., the world supposed to exist in its own right, is unreal or false, endowed with no more than pragmatic or conventional reality (*vyavaharic satva*). But Advaitavada seems to us definitely mistaken in supposing that

the world completely disappears or appears unreal from the standpoint of ultimate knowledge. To the eye of wisdom purged of all taint of *avidya* the world rather appears in its proper perspective as eternally dependent upon Brahman and as the rhythmic manifestation of the latter, and not as unreal. What completely disappears from the standpoint of ultimate reality is the world supposed to be existent in its own right, but not the world perceived as the self-articulation of the infinitely opulent and creative unity of the basic consciousness which we call the Spirit. If, however, Advaitavada is so interpreted as to mean that the world is unreal in the sense of being essentially dependent upon Brahman or as enjoying only derivative reality, then there is left no ground for objection. But then that would be a very unusual meaning of the term 'unreal' or 'mithya.'

PURNADVAITAVADA AS INCLUSIVE SYNTHESIS

Let us now briefly put together the elements of truth that we have traced in such divergent modes of interpretation of the Vedānta as Dvaitavada, Viśiṣṭadvaitavada, and Advaitavada. The Vedānta as originally taught in the Upanisads would be a synthetic reconciliation of these different modes of interpretation, and the term Purnadvaitavada has been employed to express this synthetic outlook. Dvaitavada has rightly laid emphasis upon the divine significance of the cosmic drama and the important role of spiritual individuality therein. But Dvaitavada overshoots its mark in claiming ontological separation for the world and the individual in support of its central contention. Viśiṣṭadvaitavada rightly emphasises the all-comprehensive sovereign reality of the infinite divine personality, who is the repository of all auspicious qualities, but it is definitely mistaken in ignoring the element of pure transcendence and indetermina-

ability in the nature of the supreme Spirit. Advaitavada utters forth the profoundest spiritual intuition when it affirms that the Spirit in its deepest essence is transcendent, ineffable, indeterminable and absolutely free. But it misses the integral truth when it suppose that ineffable transcendence is the last word about the nature of the supreme Spirit, so that its cosmic and individual self-determinations are in ultimate analysis unreal. Purnadvaitavada maintains that Reality comprises three eternal poises of being of the Spirit, to wit, supra-cosmic transcendence, cosmic universality, and unique individuality. The Spirit is indeed essentially indeterminable (Nirguna), but the term indeterminable does not mean incapable of any real self-determination, but rather freedom from limitation by any such self-determination. As supra-cosmic transcendence, Brahman is not a blank featureless unity, but an infinitely opulent unity embracing an unlimited wealth of content and measureless possibility. Endowed with the latent capacity for endless self-determination, it is assuredly Saktijukta; but then, the precise relation between Sakti and Siva, between dynamis and status, which are two inseparable aspects of the supreme Spirit, is incapable of exact logical formulation. The categories of substance-attribute, cause-effect, whole-part, and the like, are simply inapplicable in this ultimate context. Infinite manifoldness is surely there in the unity of the supreme Spirit in its supra-cosmic transcendence, but it is a sort of supra-relational integral whole, and not a relational unity-in-plurality. That is why the supreme Spirit is characterized as ineffable and logically indefinable (*avangmanasogocara*). But be it noted that though Saktijukta, the supreme Spirit (*Parabrahman*) is also in a sense Saktimukta. Not indeed in the sense that It is void of any capacity for real self-determination, but in the sense that It is absolutely free in the matter of granting or withholding sanction to its

latent capacity for self-determination (Sakti), without which sanction the latter can by no means embark upon her creative adventure. The Spirit is under no necessity or compulsion in regard to its latent creative urge. The concept of Nirguna Brahman sums up these elements of ineffability, total transcendence and absolute freedom in the life of the supreme Spirit. Mayavāda¹ is perfectly right in regarding Nirguna Brahman as the highest aspect of the Spirit, but is definitely mistaken in stripping it of any inherent power of real self-determination.

It is by reason of its power of real self-determination that the Spirit, besides being Nirguna Brahman, can also function as Saguna Brahman, that is, as a determinately qualified unity (Viśiṣṭādvaita). The Spirit is indeed the repository of all auspicious qualities as the Creator, Governor and Destroyer of the universe. But Viśiṣṭādvaitavāda stresses overmuch the aspect of Saguna Brahman, and ignores that the Spirit at its highest is pure transcendence and freedom. Finally, the power of diverse self-determination enables Parabrahman not only to function as the Lord of the universe, but also as an infinite plurality of spiritual Individuals (Jivatman). Dvaitavāda does right in laying emphasis upon the non-temporal reality and divine significance of spiritual Individuals, but it fails to recognize that they are, in ultimate analysis, the supreme Spirit itself in individualising self-limitation. The spiritual Individual is, in point of truth, a centre of universal consciousness, a focus and medium of the transcendent Divine. Eternally free in itself, the spiritual Individual is essentially identical with the All of existence and also identical with the all-transcending One. That is why Purnādvaitavāda maintains that supra-cosmic transcendence, cosmic universality and unique individuality are three equally real non-temporal poises of being of the same supreme Spirit. The Individual may be less fundamental, but surely not

less real, than the Universal or the Transcendent. Similarly, the Universal may be less fundamental, but surely not less real, than the Transcendent.

The Universal Spirit (Isvara) being as real as the Transcendent Spirit (Brahman), the world-process cannot be unreal in any straightforward sense of the term. The spiritual Individual being as real as the Divine, he must have a significant role to fulfil in the cosmic drama. Emancipated from the bonds of Ignorance or lower Nature, he is indeed at full liberty to choose either rapturous communion with the Lord on some supra-physical plane of consciousness or the state of blissful absorption in Brahman. But the noblest fruition of individuality would lie not simply in returning to the bosom of the Infinite from which he was separated through Ignorance, but in functioning as a perfect medium of self-manifestation of the Divine in material conditions and under the aspect of temporality. So, *mukti* or re-union with the Divine, or more strictly, realization of eternal identity with the Divine, is only a means to a still higher goal of the Individual's life, namely, conscious co-operation with the Divine for the fulfilment of His purpose in the scheme of evolution. It is this message of dynamic spirituality which the Vedanta, as interpreted by Sri Aurobindo, has to give to the world at its present juncture. The world is confronted today with the alternatives of atomic self-destruction and a new creative synthesis. Nothing short of a thorough reconstruction of the whole texture and pattern of our collective living on the basis of dynamic spirituality can set humanity on the road to enduring peace and progress and harmony.

Dr. Haridas Choudhury

VEDANTA AND THE ETHICAL CONSCIOUSNESS

It has often been said that Hinduism tends to be too metaphysical, and that it leaves little scope for an ethical theory. In comparison, Buddhism is less metaphysical and more practical. It is nearer to Christianity and Western thought generally. There is indeed a "Hindu Ethics." But it is very different from Ethics as understood in the West. It does not form part of speculative philosophy. It is no part of philosophy at all. It is part of dogmatic religion based on the scripture. Hinduism is accordingly accused of being one-sided, abstract, and too metaphysical in its general tendency. Its philosophical outlook does not embrace ethical theory and practice.

This accusation is not wholly unjustified. But it is based upon a misunderstanding of Hinduism. Human mind has a three-fold reaction to reality. It wants to know reality, to feel towards it, and also to act in respect of it. Neither of these reactions can be entirely separated from the other two. But different religions lay stress upon different attitudes. Theistic religions generally lay stress upon feeling and will in varying degrees, and make knowledge quite subordinate to them. Knowledge for them takes the form of an attitude of thought which may properly be called 'belief.' A certain dogma or creed, which is a matter of faith, takes the place of knowledge. Actual direct knowledge, as distinct from a feeling of conviction or certainty, is regarded as an unattainable ideal.

There are non-theistic religions like Buddhism that stress the moral aspect and the purification of the will. But the will requires guidance or direction. Will by itself is blind. Will requires to be guided by knowledge, the knowledge of the law. The law makes for freedom. Action in accordance with it makes one free, action opposed to it binds. Thus knowledge of the law is implied by the moral attitude; but it is a means to an end, not the end itself. Buddha was called the Enlightened One, because he knew the Law, the *dhamma*. It was the Law of the universe, governing all creatures including men and gods. Feeling too is here; but it is subsidiary. It is the feeling of compassion for all suffering life. It is subordinate to the knowledge of the Law and its observance.

Hinduism, in its higher form, that of Advaita Vedanta, is a religion of pure knowledge. It takes *literally* the dictum,—“There is no religion higher than Truth,” or again “Knowledge shall make thee free.” It finds this truth not in an unknown super-sensible reality called God, but in that super-sensible reality which is most immediate to us, which is called *sai-cit-ananda*, and which can only be known as identical with our true and immediate Self or *atman*. This knowledge is the be-all and the end-all of human effort. Feeling is here. But evidently it cannot retain its ordinary sense, in which it takes the form of love *for another*; for there is *no other* when we know the truth. But feeling nevertheless achieves its highest fruition. For the Self is Love. It is the dearest thing to us, it is the only thing that we may be said to love for its own sake, and not for the sake of another. “Not for the sake of the wife is the wife dear, but for the sake of the Self is she so dear, etc.” The Self alone is unconditionally dear. Love is the very nature of the Self, and we therefore call the Self *ananda* or bliss. Here feeling achieves a fulfilment which is

impossible in the case of any outside object, however grand or great or lovable. Feeling coincides with the very *being* of the thing that is felt. There is no distinction. The Self is *sat*, and at the same time *ananda*. No religion can ever go beyond such fruition of feeling or love. It is love that transcends all other loves. It has no limitations of duality. We cannot add to it. We cannot withhold it or bestow it. It is not in our power; for we as individuals have ceased to be. Knowledge neither gives nor takes away. It merely reveals the eternally joyful nature of reality. It is love at the purest, where *we do nothing*.

5. We come now to the question of morality. If we know the truth, this knowledge should ordinarily affect the nature of what we do. In a sense, all action is subsidiary to knowledge, and is determined by it. We always act in accordance with our knowledge or in accordance with what we believe to be true. It was this connection of knowledge with morality that was the basis of the Socratic method of ethical enquiry. Knowledge was supposed to be the sole determinant of morality. When you know what is good or moral, you are naturally inclined to do it. Indeed, the flesh (meaning here the Will as governed by carnal desires) may be weak, and we may not do what we know to be good. But a distinction must be drawn in this connection between belief and knowledge as such. Where only belief is involved, there may be vacillation of the Will. But where we are concerned with knowledge pure and simple, the Will cannot but follow suit. It is the servant of knowledge. No one who sees fire and knows that it will burn will ever put his hand in it. In all those cases therefore where there is vacillation of the Will or departure from what is believed to be the good, the understanding will be found to be clouded and knowledge deficient. There will be an element of delusion or *moha* mixed with our knowledge.

Knowledge will not be clear, transparent and convincing. Arjuna, on the battlefield of Kurukshetra, was uncertain as to what he should do, because his understanding was clouded. Sri Krishna merely tried to remove the delusive element, and the appropriate action followed as a matter of course. He did not persuade Arjuna to fight. He merely clarified the issues which made fighting so repugnant to him. Knowledge then is the natural basis of morality. In the case of the highest knowledge, which is the aim of the Vedanta, no particular course of action or morality seems to be indicated. In a sense, there is opposition between this knowledge and morality: (a) Morality proceeds on the basis of something that is good or valuable and that is yet to be achieved. Knowledge tells us that the highest value is eternally accomplished. (b) We act, because we are impelled by desire; and desire is born of delusion or ignorance about the true nature of our own Self. Knowledge removes this ignorance. (c) An action is based upon the notion of real creativity, the reality of time, and the reality of the Agent. Knowledge dissipates this illusion. Where then is there any scope for action? He who knows the truth " achieves what was there to be achieved. There is nothing left unachieved or yet to be achieved for him." Knowledge cancels *real* action or *real* morality: truth has made us free.

6. Morality has however a part to play *in knowledge*. It prepares the ground for it. Its main function here is not ethical in the sense of having any reference to social conduct. It has reference purely to personal conduct. It consists in the control of the desires and passions which render the mind ruffled, unsteady and incapable of concentrated effort. Mental purity and steadiness are essential to knowledge, and morality consists in all those actions which further this end. The law of morality is not an external law,—thou shalt do this or

shalt do that. It is internal to the individual and must be judged by its effect upon the individual's peace of mind and self-possession. There is no other end of morality, and there is no action that is moral for any outside reason. It is individual perfection that is the primary goal. Social well-being is only a by-product. An act is good and moral if it makes for internal peace and harmony. It is bad if it disrupts the individual from within, making him a victim of every passing whim or desire.

7. We have seen so far that there is no scope for morality after knowledge, but that there is a kind of morality which is necessary before knowledge arises. This however is not the whole truth. There is a third aspect of our moral activity which is in a sense more inclusive. This has reference to the unavoidableness and the naturalness of action in the embodied state. Life means activity. We cannot help carrying on certain activities for the maintenance of our body and our place in society. There is no sin in these activities, and we are not required to renounce them; and as a matter of fact we cannot renounce them and live. Activity is normal and natural. We make it good or bad by introducing our individualistic aims and objects. We shall go further. All aims and objects, because they are egoistic, are essentially immoral and therefore bad. Our egoism is our only sin. If the truth is the whole, every activity that sets up the good of the individual as opposed to the whole and reinforces our individuality is a sin against the whole. There are in this sense no good or moral ends. All ends are a form of vice. The distinction of good ends and bad ends is relative only. An end is good in so far as it draws the individual out of himself and his own immediate interests and makes him subordinate to a larger and a larger whole. This is what we call ethical conduct proper. The individual seeks to serve his fellow brethren.

But is his ego-consciousness abolished in his service? Not necessarily. It is only refined and sublimated. All those individuals who set up social service as the goal of their life, and who can think nothing better for themselves, are steeped in this form of subtle egoism. They have a feeling of 'doing a good thing' or 'doing a turn to others.' They cannot get rid of the conceit of their individual goodness. They hug their ego without knowing it. This sort of selfless conduct is still therefore a form of bondage. The world of individuals and my efforts to improve their lot are still taken to be very real. It is a kind of delusion. The truth is that what we call moral activity does not, and cannot, conform to the higher knowledge. Those who think that a freed soul *must* still serve his fellow-men, and who think that the higher knowledge requires to be put into practice, do not seem to realise the implications of that knowledge. It is political bias or some purely human feeling that impels them to set up action as the fruition of knowledge. In truth, knowledge is its own fruition. Nothing can perfect knowledge. It is the end, not a *means* to an end. Any 'ought' or 'must' is directly opposed to the freedom that ensues on knowledge.

8. This does not mean that a man of knowledge will not act or that he will renounce the world. He will certainly act as long as life lasts. But his activity will obey *no law*. There is no 'ought' for him. As it is said, "The wind bloweth where it *listeth*". So also a man of knowledge will act as his nature prompts him. But since his individuality is completely burnt out within him through knowledge, he is not bound by whatever he does. The distinction of good and bad, based upon the reality of the individual and his relation to society, is abolished for him. He acts without any desire for the fruit thereof; for desire is the symbol of individuality and finitude. It is only a man of knowledge that

can act without desire of any kind. He alone is perfectly free. It is not possible to subjugate all one's desires before knowledge has arisen. Before knowledge has arisen, there will be delusion or *moha* of some kind or other leading to desire. A pure desire is still a bondage. Life receives a new orientation only when knowledge dawns. For then we realise the valuelessness of life itself; or what is the same thing, we have a new life or life in the spirit as such. Such a man of unruffled temper cannot pass unnoticed. He is unaffected either by praise or by calumny. He cannot be judged by any standard common to the man of the world. He is above the moral law. His morality is that of the superman; for morality as such is for him a category that is already transcended. There is nothing moral or immoral for him. Nietzsche's Superman was above "good and bad;" but he was steeped in his egotism. This man is free.

8. Will not the man of knowledge help others out of their difficulties, and ultimately help them out of their ignorance? It is argued that it is a form of selfishness to seek one's own emancipation and remain indifferent to the emancipation of others. A man of knowledge must be a man of large sympathies. How can he be happy when every one around him remains unhappy? Buddhism realised this, and it was part of the destiny of a Bodhi-sattva to devote himself to the uplift of mankind. A person of true realisation has thus still a job in his hands, —to save the world. Accordingly, a person is a greater person if he helps others after knowledge than if he retires from the world, takes *sannyasa*, rejoices in his own freedom and leaves the world to its fate. Even God comes back in human form to help mankind, and re-establishes the realm of the spirit on earth. We should expect the same behaviour and the same helpfulness from a man who claims to know his identity with Godhead.

10. This view is in conformity with the Western activistic ideal. But it is alien to Vedanta, and cuts at the very root of the Vedantic ideal of knowledge. No one can possibly desire to re-enter a world of dreams which he has left behind in order to make that world a happier or a better world. It can only appear to him a fruitless and a useless task. Nobody can be interested in the killing of an illusory snake. The worries of the world are of like nature. They are illusory worries. The man of knowledge thus finds no strong impulse to activity. But this does not mean that he would necessarily retire from the world. To seek to retire is still to regard the world as a real trap, which would go counter to his knowledge. The truth is that his conduct follows no law except the law of freedom. He is not bound to do anything, or even not to do anything. There is no injunction and no obligation for him. The opposition of the individual and society has ceased to have any meaning for him. He acts as his nature prompts him; for as a human being he has a history and a human nature. But internally he is free. He acts, and yet he does not act, because he does not consider himself an agent. Can we prescribe any course of activity for him or judge him?

11. We conclude that the highest form of a religion for Hinduism is the religion of knowledge. This religion is inconsistent with any interest in Ethical Theory as understood in the West. Freedom can be achieved not through action, but through knowledge alone,—“*jñānat eva tu kaivalyam*.” Action is a means to an end. Knowledge is the end.

G. R. MALKANI

THE NATURE OF SELF: GENTILE AND SAMKARA

The basic concept in Gentile's philosophy is the creativity of consciousness. For Gentile thought is a living, dynamic process. According to him spirit is ever accomplishing itself and is not eternally accomplished. Gentile cannot accept the old dialectic because it makes Reality an accomplished fact and thus creates the difficulty of reconciling unity and multiplicity. He maintains that ancient dialectic is a dialectic of thought as thought and this makes thought self-identical. According to Hegel, the principle of non-contradiction is the indispensable condition of thought. Although Hegel perceives and recognises the inherent contradiction in the nature of thought, yet the contradiction is ultimately resolved in the final synthesis. Thus thought is completely accomplished and the task of Philosophy finished. Gentile cannot agree to such a position. To Gentile however true thought is not 'thought thought' but--'thought thinking.'

Gentile has defined spirit as "an infinite possibility overflowing into infinite actuality." In other words, the spirit or the transcendental 'I' is characterised by unceasing movement; there is no end to which it moves, there is no source from which it rises.

The essential characteristics of spirit may be noted in this connection:

First, spirit is subjective activity or actual subjectivity; it is subject as act.

Secondly, spirit is concrete unity of intuition and concept, of knowledge and action. It is infinite and universal unity since there is nothing outside its actuality.

Thirdly, spirit is freedom, since there is nothing to limit it.

Fourthly, spirit is becoming in nature, so that in all its processes it owes allegiance only to itself.

¹ *Theory of Mind as Pure Act*, §. 43.

Fifthly, spirit is history, it is ever creating itself and its world and resolving both itself and its world into a deeper and richer subjective reality.

Lastly, spirit in so far as it is aware of its history and of nature is Philosophy and the fullest self-consciousness of itself as a unity and a process in any of its historical positions.

An important conclusion emerges from this view: That Reality is History. Gentile contends that the essence of mental activity is history. A mind is not something which *has* history in the sense that it is above and beyond historical processes. The History of every individual is nothing but the mental processes which it records. And since Reality is mental, it is History. In other words, Reality or spirit is an activity or development.

The problem that Gentile tries to solve is this: If spirit is a unity, how can we explain the multiplicity of distinct forms? How can unity and distinctions both be equally real? Once we admit with Gentile the truth of "actual idealism," this difficulty disappears. For Gentile urges that the object of knowing is the subject himself looking into his own inwardness, thus realising himself ever anew by his own creative knowing. Since spirit is the only reality and its reality is its activity, the activity by which he knows is the very activity by which he is ever creating the world. This unity is not set over against multiplicity; rather, it realises itself through multiplicity.

The view that self or pure consciousness is an act does not find favour with Sankara, for activity by its very nature is non-eternal, whereas consciousness is eternal or timeless. The objects of knowledge, Sankara urges, have temporal determinations such as past, present and future, but that for which these temporal determinations have meaning cannot itself be in time.

While for Kant the self is merely a necessary logical

postulate of experience, for Sankara it is pure being and pure intuition or consciousness. Not that self has consciousness as Descartes would have it, but self is consciousness. Consciousness is both the foundational reality and experience. It is an *anubhava* where the distinctions of subject, object and process are eternally negated. It is an identical witness which is unaffected by the panorama of changes. Self or consciousness cannot be conceived as an object among other objects, because it is consciousness alone for which all objects have meaning. Consciousness is like light which reveals everything but does not require a second light for its illumination.¹ Consciousness is self-established, since it is the basis of all processes of proof and thus is prior to all proofs.

The common assumption that a thing is real in so far as it is presented as a definite object lies at the root of all theories of presentationism and agnosticism. The Nyaya and Visishtadvaita views of self as substance can be traced to the same false assumption. Sankara is always anxious to point out that the *conditio sine qua non* of all objective knowledge is that an object should possess a generic unity with specific differences. A thing can be known objectively only when it is differentiated from things other than itself. The category of substance as applied to an object requires a plurality of things that should at the same time belong to the same genus. But the self cannot be brought under any category because all distinctions and categories are intelligible only on the basis of the self. Kant emphasised the same truth when he said that the self is not a category since it is the necessary logical presupposition of all categorical experience.

The relation of substance and attribute as between self and consciousness is ruled out for the following reasons: The so-called relation may be one of identity or difference. If consciousness is different from self, no relation of sub-

¹ *Chakki Ch.* 1.

tance and attribute can be established between them. Besides, in the case of different objects the relation may be either external conjunction (*samyoga*) or inherent relation (*samavaya*). The former holds between corporeal things and as such cannot be applied to consciousness and self. If there be any inherent relation between the two, this relation should first relate itself to self and then to consciousness and self; and the second relation must also be related to self and so on *ad infinitum*. Thus if self and consciousness are different from each other, it is not possible to establish the relation of substance and attribute between them; if they are identical (which view is upheld by Samkara), there is no point in saying that the one is substance and the other attribute.

It must be added, meanwhile, that Gentile is at one with Samkara with regard to three cardinal points. Firstly, that the self is self-established and self-manifest (*svaprakasah*). Gentile says: "In so far as consciousness is an object of consciousness, it is no longer consciousness." Secondly, that the self cannot be known in an objective manner. We must not, Gentile insists, put together the unity of mind with the multiplicity of things, because the two stand on entirely different bases; "multiplicity belongs to things in so far as they are objects of the ego or rather in so far as all together are gathered into the unity of consciousness."¹ Thirdly, the unity of the mind is infinite in the positive sense of the term. The unity of mind cannot be limited by other realities. Consequently, "a unique and infinite thing would not be knowable (in an objective way) because to know is to distinguish one thing from another."²

The fundamental difference between Gentile and Samkara lies in the fact that while the former conceives of consciousness as an ever accomplishing act, the latter thinks it to be an eternally accomplished fact.

¹ *Theory of Mind as Pure Act*, p. 32.

² *Ibid.*, p. 32.

Gentile tells us that the activity of the Transcendental Ego individualises itself through space and time. For Gentile space is nothing but a spatialising activity and time a temporalising activity. While for Kant space and time are forms of receptivity of the thinking ego, for Gentile these are forms of creation of the Transcendental or creative Ego. This creative Ego may be likened to Vedantic Iswara but not to Brahman which is timeless. Gentile conceives of the Transcendental Ego as an eternal presence "in which all rays of time converge," meaning thereby that in it there is an integration of past, present and future. For Sankara on the contrary, eternity means timelessness; consciousness, for which all divisions and distinctions have meaning, cannot itself be divided into instants. In fact, Gentile's position is a middle course between Samkaritism and Kantianism. Gentile advances beyond Kant in conceiving of space and time as forms of creation of the spirit, but he has not reached the summit of Vedantic intuition since he allows temporal determination in consciousness or spirit.

It has been Sankara's untiring effort to urge that activity implies dualism as well as change, and consciousness can have neither. Self cannot be the abode of action, for an action cannot exist without modifying that in which it abides. But if the self were modified by any action it would be non-eternal, which it is not. An action is dependent on an agent and as such it may either be performed or not performed or modified. But consciousness or knowledge always is and has for its object existing things and thus can neither be made, unmade or modified.

Sankara rightly asserts that consciousness cannot be divided into moments, since all divisions are rendered intelligible only with reference to consciousness. The fact that we can know temporal determination points unmistakably to the truth that we are children of eternity.

Consciousness is in fact distinctionless. Still it appears to be divided owing to the limiting adjuncts such as mind and so on, just as ether appears divided by its connexion with jars and the like. If, as Samkara rightly urges, the self or consciousness changes with change in ideas there would not be consciousness of the series as a unity. The serial unity is, therefore, entirely different from, and points to an unchanging conscious principle at the background which there is no plurality. It follows, clearly, that man, in so far as he knows history, cannot be identical with history. The knowledge of a changing reality cannot be possible for a being who is nothing more than a part of the changing reality. In other words, consciousness of change precludes the possibility of change in consciousness.

That consciousness is an unchanging witness is proved by the fact of dreamless sleep. It is but common knowledge that dream-experience and waking experience are fundamentally different. We fail to ascertain the beginning or end of both waking and dream states, for both seem to be uncaused. A cause can connect one event with another belonging to the same time order and the cause of a state should have to be in the same order as that state, so that any attempt to transcend that state in order to discover the cause thereof would be meaningless. When we compare waking state with dream the soul assumes the position of a witness of the two and no change can be allowed in the witness. Dream is a rival state as real as waking. The two are independent of each other and both have claim to a reality of their own. If it is objected that waking consciousness is never stultified, whereas a dream is, the reply will be that as waking consciousness cannot be stultified so long as it continues, so dream is not stultified so long as it is dream. It follows that there is no interval of time between dream and waking although there seems to be such an interval. Strictly speaking we have

there a time-less witness-consciousness. If a time interval is supposed, it would connect dream and waking and would make the two a single continuous stage. But experience does not testify to the continuity between dream-life and waking-life. In fact, waking time is confined to waking and stops with it, dream-time is co-eval with dream. The interval between the two is metaphysical. It is pure consciousness which shines in dreamless sleep and witnesses both the dream-experience and waking-experience. Thus consciousness cannot be subject to change because it is witness of change.

When Samkara says that consciousness is timeless, he does not minimise the role of time in knowledge. The truth is that no knowledge (in the sense of perception) is possible without the function of two distinct principles, one of which undergoes modifications in time, while the other remains unchanging and unmodified. The former is *antahkarana* and the latter *chit*. It is a confusion between these two principles that has vitiated most of the analyses of self in western philosophy.¹

It is really interesting to note that Samkara's theory of self has been vindicated from an unexpected quarter by no less an authority than Lord Haldane. Lord Haldane in his "The Reign of Relativity" has subscribed to the view that knowledge or consciousness is foundational. Knowledge is, says Lord Haldane, the ultimate reality capable of expression in no terms beyond its own. "Knowledge is not a property of a substance; it cannot be called property even of the subject. It is the subject itself in its essential aspect."²

These utterances may be taken to be an illuminating exposition of Samkara's theory of self.

A. K. MAZUMDAR

¹ The writer is indebted to Prof. A. C. Mahalanobis's *The Nature of Self and Self, Thought and Reality* for this aspect of Samkara's philosophy.

² *The Reign of Relativity*, p. 328.

AN APPROACH TO INDIAN PSYCHOLOGY

That the basis of Indian philosophy is Indian psychology is an accepted principle these days. There is abundant evidence of this in both the theory and practice of the ancient Hindu doctrine. The Samhitas and Upanishads are as much the text books of Indian psychology as Indian philosophy. Moreover, in view of the fact that all the data for the philosophical speculation are mostly psychological, it would not be far from truth to say that in India Psychology is the 'mother of sciences and not Philosophy.'

The question, where to draw the line between Indian philosophy and psychology, would be automatically answered if a proper conception as to the Indian psychological point of view could be systematically formulated.

It is well-known that the Rishis became 'seers' through the power of 'Tapas' (as system of certain observances and practices). These seers unanimously denounce the common ends and means that seem to be universally engaging people into activity; and it is also well-known that they enjoin upon all to do certain acts and to refrain from others, i.e., in other words to follow a definite course of Tapas. Accepting for the time being that this teaching basically involves some psychological facts, it may be asserted that the essential character of Indian psychology is its practical outlook—practical in the sense that all its theoretical conclusions are derived from actual experience gained through certain specific practices undergone by the theorists themselves.

The denunciation of all that constitutes the general run of behaviour in contradistinction with the positive

acclamation in favour of certain specific practices, as involved in the above teaching, is indeed very significant. It is just as saying that it is not the way you do that makes for a real living; it is this particular way that you ought to live. The basic position underlying such a view may be summed up, as far as possible, in the words of the Upanishads themselves, as follows.

Mind, breath, speech, seeing, hearing, etc., are simply names of activities (ए etc., B. U. 1-4-7). They always require some stimulation to send them forth into activity (Kena-1-1). These activities describe him (Atman) only in अहम्भूतो हि सः एकेकेन यद्वति B. U. 1-4-7). The mediating factors of all such stimulation always being some objects or events in the environment, the so-called self (the wordly Atman or ego), that can only be referred in terms of these activities, turns out to be nothing but an extension of his own environment. It is, therefore, the 'world of others' जयं वाच जाल्मा मृतान् लोकः B.U. 1-4-16). All these activities have been perfected through constant repetition. They have been so exclusively practised that all faith beyond them is exhausted and people have come to believe that only this world, i.e., in other words, the demonstration of these activities into action, exists and that there is no growth and development beyond them. This 'onward march' of development is unfit for the simpleton (न सांपरायः प्रविशति वाचः) Katha U. 1-2-6). This partially evolved self is all in all for them. One should only seek the self as a whole (आत्मानमेव लोकमुपासीत B.U. 1-4-16). The understanding or learning of this concept of the self as a whole is not merely a matter of textual study or scholastic research (नैवा वर्त्तेन वदितव्यमेवा Katha 1-2-9). To be sure, neither a theory of the 'Self' is called for. It is a matter of specific growth, development, nature, trial and error, just as other specific concepts do, in fact, depend on these.

The whole matter as discussed above properly belongs to what is known as ego-psychology, that has gained a new impetus in recent years and for which G. W. Allport predicts a bright future. As pointed out by the same author, modern ego-psychology deals with two concepts of self-hood, *viz.*, ego and personality and "all writers seem agreed that the ego is only one portion or region or, as the Freudians say, one institution of personality."

The Hindu conception of self-hood allows for the distinction between a partial and the whole self, but it is important to remember that such distinction is limited to theoretical purposes only. As far as normal psychology is concerned, the fundamental hypothesis of the Indian view seems to be this: the conceptual and perceptual processes which underlie the feeling of "I" with respect to every individual, constitute only a partial achievement in the direction of the self-hood proper, since they amount to nothing but certain inner reflections on certain outward conditions. These reflections bear in all the human organisms a generalised character in the same proportions as the respective environmental conditions bear a common form. In so far as they tend to be inner, they may be said to possess a non-environmental or selfhood character and in so far as the ideational content of such processes is introduced by and is understandable in the environmental context only, the selfhood involved is said to be partial or incomplete.

Right from Hume up to the psycho-analysts and many social psychologists of to-day, the ego is regarded as a derivative of a certain group of sensations. The Freudian picture of ego as a system of organised mental processes directly conditioned by the reality-principle or environment is not very different from that as viewed by the French psychologist M. Biran, also a voluntarist who conceives the "self" as engendered by the resistance offered to the blind movements of early infancy. What

offers such resistance to the environmental processes and ultimately assumes the position of ego, has only one category of description, viz., that it is of non-environmental character. "It is neither this nor that" (*नेति नेति*), "It is different from the known, as well as from the unknown" (*अन्यदेव तद्विदिता इको अविविदिता इति*) Kena 1-1-3). "Different from religion, different from irreligion, different from the done, different from undone, etc." (*अन्वन्न धर्मोऽन्वन्न धर्मोऽन्वन्नायन्तु कृताकृताम् ।*) Katha-1-2-4). These and other like passages in the Upanishads only emphasize the non-environmental or ultra-mundane character of the 'Atman' or selfhood proper. As far as mere formal aspects are concerned, this Indian view of Atman does not seem to be very different from the Freudian concept of "Id," particularly with reference to its dominant characteristics of ambivalence and non-recognition of time. Since the stimulating processes are governed by definite laws and are marked by periodicity, the change effected through them in this non-temporal field, that knows no law but of itself, during ego-genesis, may well be indicated as emergence of the concept of time and an apparent abolition of ambivalence. The configuration thus described may then be said to be virtually similar to a response attitude.

The process of the building up of the response attitude itself is, however, altogether different. Since the ego is considered as a product of individual stimulus-response events, it cannot in any way be regarded as responsible either for the response or for the response attitude. Whether the 'frame of reference' is purely a 'physicalist' one, as in Behaviourism, or purely 'mentalistic' as in psycho-analysis, with regard to the problem of psychogenesis, modern psychology clearly envisages a sort of determinism which invalidates all discussions about the 'Self' or 'Soul' or 'Ego' as the doer or author of a behavioural performance. On the contrary positive

evidence seems to be in favour of the view that the ego, if involved at all in such mental process, is only passively so. In entire agreement with this deterministic trend the Indian view holds the 'traces of past actions' (Samskaras) as the main determinants of a particular response-attitude (Vritti). According to Patanjali there are five main categories, probably psychogenetically determined, of response-attitudes, which form, so to say, the archaic heritage of individual mental apparatus, the classification being based on their relations with the environment. They are the following—

- (1) Pramana Vritti—that is perfectly consistent with the existing environment.
- (2) Viparyaya Vritti—that is inconsistent with the existing environment.
- (3) Vikalpa Vritti—that is related to a non-existent environment.
- (4) Nidra Vritti—that is related to no environment.

These constantly inter-change positions between themselves and involving the incoming train of stimuli issue forth as several derivatives of themselves which constitute the different behavioral sequences in different individuals. The ego is only a result of all such changes.

The response attitudes having thus been shown to be different from the ego, the only thing that can be said about its nature is that it is a kind of 'awareness.' But never in life except in the state of Samadhi, such a separation between the feeling of the self and a response-attitude, can be effected. In non-Samadhi states, therefore, the awareness is related to the response-attitudes (वृत्ति-साक्ष्यविवरण भा. सू. 1-4). That such a separation of the two is essential for the further development of the ego and that in such further development alone lies the perfection of the human process are the fundamental postulates of Indian psychology. The first

of these is practically unknown to any western school of thought, ancient or modern; while the second seems to be an accepted principle in psycho-analysis, as will be clear from Freud's own remarks regarding the objectives of psycho-analytical methods, *viz.* "Where Id was there shall ego be; it is the reclamation work." But further development of the ego is viewed in psycho-analysis as the development of the conscious with consequent reduction of the unconscious. Ego is related to external perceptions only; the so-called internal perceptions lie far beyond its province, because they have only a pictorial language and not a verbal one. A special method of interpreting these pictorial images in terms of verbal ones, is the only way according to Freud of forging links between the conscious and the unconscious and thus enlarging the scope of the former.

It would not be difficult to believe that the so-called internal perceptions have something to do with the process of ego-development when the ego-feeling itself can be regarded as one of them. According to Thomas Brown of the Scottish school of last century, our muscle sense is responsible for our notion of resistance which again, as M. Biran suggests, is responsible for ego-genesis. This seems to be fairly plausible inasmuch as the muscle sense forms an important part of our internal perceptions. Some such relation of the muscle sense with the process of ego development also seems to be implied in the Indian view. It is very remarkable to see in this connection that the practice of Yoga, that is said to confer the state of "Kaivalya" or perfect selfhood, should begin with Asan (the continued maintenance of body musculature in a particular posture). It is needless to point out that such prolonged and regularly maintained muscular movement is bound to give a constant and regular pattern of muscular sensations. Before hastening to draw any conclusions from this, it is sufficient to remark here that

the Indian view is more inclined to believe that the transposing of the unconscious internal perceptions to the conscious plane is more a matter of actual learning than of investigation and interpretation of some arbitrarily conceived mysteries.

Howsoever the Indian psychological practice may seem to utilise this principle of contraction of the unconscious or expansion of the conscious, it is important to remember that the Indian conception of further development in the ego-processes is in no way limited to that. The positive features of such development are indeed hard to define. Negatively speaking, we have only to bear in mind what constitutes the "partialness" or "incompleteness" of the ego and understand that the further stage in its development consists in the elimination of them. The ego is considered as incomplete because it is, in essence, an awareness of a response attitude only. If, by any means, these response attitudes could be eliminated from the ego, then the awareness would naturally fall on nothing but pure selfhood as it is—
 यदा हृद्युः स्वहृदयस्वानम् वा० ह्य १-३. The practical method of suppressing the response-attitudes on the ego level is Yoga—योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः वा० ह्य १-२.

To summarise, the salient features of the Indian point of view may be enumerated as follows:—

(1) All our actions leave more or less permanent traces or modifications in our psycho-physical structure. All such modifications in the past, traceable either to early ontogenic or phylogenic history, tend to combine into groups that come to bear fixed propensities for fixed relations with the environment. They are known as Vrittis. (सर्ववृत्तिनिरोधकं यत्कर्मणि शमावस्थे । आ शमावस्थे १-४).

(2) The awareness of the self-generated through such attitudes is a unique phenomenon in itself, that has no physical or even mundane category of explanation. It

can only be conceived as the opening up of new vistas for individual growth and development in the biological sense.

(3) The first step in such development is the enlargement of the scope of this awareness beyond the response attitudes in all the three spheres of mental functioning, *viz.*, cognitive, affective and conative.

(4) Such enlargement of the concept of the Self is a matter of actual learning, involving specific trials and the avoidance of specific errors.

The above is, of course, not a critical exposition but simply an attempt at a systematic presentation of the Indian view. It is possible that only a single aspect and not the whole view has been treated here. It must, however, be borne in mind that much original work is needed, before Indian psychology can be critically discussed from modern scientific point of view.

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THE AVESTA FROM THE HINDU POINT OF VIEW

In the whole of world literature there is nothing which can stand comparison with the Vedas. For their serene and solemn outlook, for their grand style, their spiritual values and their universal appeal, they are the loftiest masterpieces of ancient human achievements. The Avesta, the book of the old Iranians, who were the nearest kinsmen of our Aryan forefathers, throws considerable light on the thoughts and ideals of the Vedas, and when studied in the background of the Vedic literature, the Avesta discloses new shades of meanings. A comparative study of the Vedas and the Avesta is thus of real positive value both to the Hindus, whose culture and religion are based on the Vedas and the Parsis who look upon the Avesta as their sacred Bible.

The meaning of the word *Avesta* is uncertain and different scholars give different meanings. We would think however that the name is derived from the Sanskrit word *Upastha*, which is a synonym, for the Veda. Sanjana in his work on "The Ancient Persia and the Parsia" writes: The conjecture of Prof. Andrews, which Karl F. Geldner is disposed to concur in, is that *Avistak* or *Avastak* is to be traced back to the old form *Upastha* and thus magnifies foundation or foundation-text. Sanjana, however, does not seem to have known that *Upastha* is equivalent for the Veda just as *Sruta*, *Amnaya* and others. The Sanskrit equivalents for the Veda, *Mantra*, *Sruti*, *Amnayas*, *Chandas* have their counterparts in the Avesta as *Mathra*, *Prasanto*, *Benai* and *Zend*.

The Atharva-veda is styled as Atharvangirasa or Bhiringwangiras. Generally it is interpreted to mean that the Atharva-veda consists of two classes of Mantras—spells that protect the sacrifices and hymns that refer to sacrifices. But a better conclusion would be to take the Atharva-veda to consist of two books, one of the Atharvans and the other of the Angirasa. Atharva and Angira are two famous *ṛsis*. Their descendants and followers are known as Atharvans and Angirases. There is a *Rk* which says that it was Atharva who first disclosed the path of sacrifice. The heirs and disciples of Atharva, who were the fire-priests of ancient India are to be identified with the Athravas, the fire-priests named in the Avesta.

We would presume that the Avesta is the last Bhargava Upastha. The extant Atharva-veda in India is only the Angirasa book of the Atharva-veda.

It has been ascertained beyond all doubt that the old Iranians and our Aryan forefathers once lived together. They had common conceptions and common ideals. But later on there was a schism between the two sections. The real reason of the quarrel is not known. We can conjecture that it was due to differences in worship. In the *Mahabharata* we find that there was a fight between the Devas and the Asuras. The Devas selected Brihaspati, the son of Angira, as their proceptor while the Asuras selected Sukra the Bhargava as their priest and teacher. It is further stated that because of this fight the two sections began to have their prayers and sacrifices by different mantras. This would explain the loss of Bhargava Upastha from our sacred literature. But if we bear this in mind, it would be possible for us to interpret the Vedas and the Avesta correctly with reference to the common ideals and conceptions. The Avesta has close resemblances, both in language and spirit, to the Vedic literature and if we try, we shall be able to find 'vedic

words, idioms and ideas as equivalents to Avestic ones.

In Yasna 71. 11 we get that "there is but one path—the path of *Asa*—all others are false paths." The essence of Avesta is *Asa*. The scholars are unanimous that the Avestan *Asa* and the Vedic *Rta* are the two variants of the same word. In the Vedas we are told that the gods are mighty because they uphold the eternal law of *Rta*. The divine deities are lords of *Rta* and protectors of the eternal law. Madhuchanda, the Vedic *Rsi* says, "O thou Mitra and Varuna, thou are great and mighty because thou lovest the everlasting law, thou cherishest the eternal order of universe."

The *gāthas* embody this Vedic idea and uphold that human life should be founded on *Asa*. In Yasna 60. 12 we find that the worshippers express the wish that "Through the last *Asa*, through the highest *Asa*, may we get a vision of thee, may we get a vision of thee, may we draw near unto thee, may we be in perfect union with Thee."

The Indo-Iranians looked upon this universal order prevailing in nature with awe and reverence and tried to mould life gracefully with the ordered movement they saw all around them. The *Asa-Rta* conception is the noblest achievement of human mind. It stands for the righteousness of Godhead and exhorts man to be of one will with *Asa* and thereby approach *Ahura mazda*, the great Asura, the highest divine being. *Asa* is *vahista* i.e., *vashistha*, the best that man can think of. To be upholder of *Asa* man must be pure in body, mind and spirit. He should have good thoughts, good words and good deeds. We must live in the atmosphere of *Asa* and radiate it all around in our life. It would bring us inward peace and joy in our daily hardships and trial. It is for this reason that *Asem vohu* has been ordained as the daily prayer of the devout Zoroastrians.

It runs thus :—

"Asem vohu vahistem asti, usta asti;

Usta uhrmai pyat Asai vahistai Asem."

It can be put into a Sanskrit verse word for word with much change :

Rtam vasu vasishtam asti istam asti

Istam atmai yatas Rtaya vasishtaya Rtam.

A righteous life is the richest life we can have—it is the best and should be the goal of life on earth. He attains the goal who lives for righteousness alone.

It is around this sublime pivot of universal order and righteousness that the ethics of our Indo-Iranian forefathers revolves. The gods are gods because they are possessed of *Asa* and *Rta*, and man may divinise himself by conforming his life to this noble truth in his life. Man is free to choose for himself the path of righteousness or the path of wickedness, one of which is hard and the other pleasant. But if he wants abiding peace, joy and immortality, man must embrace *Asa* and follow the good life through all the struggles of life.

The Indo-Iranians were lovers of life. To them life is a joy. They had robust faith in living. It is for this reason that the *Rsis* in the Vedas ask for hundred autumns of cheerful and happy life.

A Vedic hymn runs thus:—We must see with joy hundred autumns, we must have our feast of life for hundred years, we must live and live for hundred autumns. We must thrill with the joy of life and increase ourselves for hundred autumns. We must have the boon of life growing with joy and cheer from day to day during our long life. We must be in uniform with nature for these hundred years. We must have enthusiasm for these hundred years—nay not only hundred but more years.

In Yasna 43. 1 Zarathustra preaches also the joy of living. "Happiness comes to him who gives happi-

ness unto others. The great lord bestows joy and peace to one who dedicates himself for the good of others. For progress and for upholding the path of righteousness, one must pray for vitality and strength of soul."

Pessimism took hold of the Indian mind later on and our thinkers and philosophers lost faith in the robust optimistic outlook of the Vedic singers. To them this world became a place of sorrows and sufferings and they sought out means for escape from this sordid world. Life is pain and suffering and we must have deliverance from the world-ache. But there is nowhere this sorrowful outlook in the earliest songs and hymns. To these hardy and hopeful life was full of honey. They saw joy and gladness in all the movements of nature. Gotama Rahugana sings with glee :—

Let the wind wail sweets, the streams pour sweets for him that keeps to the path of *Rta*. Let the plants be sweet to us. Sweet be the night and sweet the dawn, sweet be the dust of the earth and sweet be our father Heaven to us.

" May the lordly trees bring sweets and pleasant be the sun.

May the quarters of the earth be full of sweets to us."

Zarathustra too asks for earthly blessings. The reward of joyful and happy life is invoked in most of his prayers. We must accept life as we find it but shall make it sweeter and richer by radiating cheer and happiness to all with whom we come in contact.

This philosophy of optimism was later on embodied in the theory of *Anandam*. Man is born of *Anandam*. He lives and has his being in *Anandam* and he merges into *Anandam*. This grand message of *Anandam* of our forefathers must be revived in the storm and stress of modern life.

But this life of happiness is not a life of sloth and idleness. It is a life of active self-sacrifice. The Aryas

and the Iranians were both followers of sacrifices. Martin Haug says :—"The Izeshne Ceremony, as performed by the Parsee priests now-a-days contains all the element of which the different parts of the *Jyotishtoma* cycle of sacrifices, the prototype of all the Soma sacrifices is composed. The *Agnishtoma* (i.e., praise of Agni, the fire-god, which is the opening sacrifice of this cycle and indispensable for every *Agnihotra*, to gain the object wished for viz., heaven, bears particularly a resemblance to the performance of Izeshne."

Yajna however is no mere ceremony. It is the realization of the great design of Godhead in the evolution of the world. Progress is possible, advance is achieved, only by the active services of man in society. When we work for the good of others and render our services for society, we not only become ourselves richest in spirit but we preserve the social order and add meaning and purpose to human history. Each man must exert himself to the best of his powers and consecrate himself for the good of humanity, we must not live for ourselves alone. We must live for one and all. We must render active services and add something worthy to the sum-total of the life of humanity.

It is said in the *Rgveda*—Kevaladas Kevalagho Bharati—one who eats himself, eats sin alone. The great world cycle moves because of sacrifices of the great Lord and we also must daily perform these sacrifices in protecting the divine kingdom of Righteousness.

Let us now turn from these general conceptions and look to some of the particular aspects of the *Avista*. The *Avista* glorifies *Ahura mazda*. Its vedic variant is *Atma mahat*. In the earliest hymns of the *Rgveda* we have references to this *Asura mahat* and there can be no doubt that before the schism *Asura mahat* was a common name for the highest divine beings among the Indo-Aryans.

In a hymn of Vamadeva we get the following :—

“Mahat tannama Guhyam Puruspog, yena
Bhutam janayo yena Bhavyam.”

“Mahat” is that secret name whereby thou
created all that is and all that shall be.”

There are seven ministering angels who together form the great Lord *Ahma mazda*. They are more or less symbolic ideals, and moral concepts. They are known as *Amesha shentus* whose Sanskrit transliteration would be *Amaritya shivatama*—the benevolent immortals. These are known as vohu Manah, Asha, Kshathra, Aramaiti, Hansvatat and Ameratal. They are the variants of Sanskrit, Brahman Rta, Kshatra, Aramati, servatats and Amritata. The first three are active virtues which when followed bring devotion, infinite blessings and immortality to the worshipper. *Vohumand* is generally translated as good mind. Man obtains power through goodness of mind. Good mind directs the paths of the devotee and through him he is able to traverse the path of Righteousness. One who resorts to the wisdom and grace of the Lord through *vahu manah* and *Asa* attain the power worldly and heavenly, of God and thereby inaugurate the kingdom of Mazda in earth.

Let me conclude the little essay with a brief summary of the Ahuna vaivya manta which is regarded by the pious as the very root of their faith. Zarathustra is acclaimed by them as a world-teacher and it is said that the hymn contains the essence of his teachings—the eternal principles of Truth, Love and Service.

“Yatha Ahu vaivyo, Atha Ratus asat cit hoca
Vanghews dozda Manangho syaothananam
anghengahem Hazdain.”

Xsahrem ca Ahurai a yim driguvyo dadat

Its Sanskrit transliteration would be something like
what is given below:

zatha Asu vuyam Atha Ratus Rtat chayat asya.
 Brahmasya data manasas kuyamananam Auusha
 Mahatas.

Kshatramch Asurasya yam durgataya dadat vatrams.
 Just as the sovereign Lord is all-powerful, so is the spiritual leader through the store of Asa, the universal order. The gift of Brahman comes to him who works for God, the Lord of life. The strength of God descends on that man indeed who gives shelter and love to the poor and meek.

The whole world moves in the path of law. We must adore this eternal law and follow it in the actions of our life. This divine law is fulfilled in our life only when we lead active lives doing good to others. The great design of God is furthered by our active co-operation and service.

This mantra therefore contains the true meanings of the prophet of *Ahura Mazda*. To attain the peace and joy of God we are to follow the three paths—the path of knowledge, the path of love and the path of service. These are inter-related. We now know and feel the presence of God, our Lord Ahura Mazda, and by love and faith we now embrace him. But this love and faith is to energise us into action. There is evil in this world. We must destroy evil. Our life is to be one of continued battle against the powers of evil and wickedness. This we can do best by seeking salvation of all mankind. We fight the evil best when we make others good. The good must triumph ultimately and we can espouse the cause of truth and virtue by fighting against wickedness and working for righteousness.

A synthetic integral philosophy of life is what the care-worn and troubled humanity needs to-day. We shall find it in the oldest teachings of our Indo-Iranian ancestors.

Let us cling fast to their noble and sublime teachings. Their faith was of life and cheer, their love was deep and purest, their worship was pure and holy and their work was selfless and pure. Let the unhappy world turn once more to the glad-tidings.

The Avesta and the Vedas together supplement one another. They proclaim the message of hope and joy. They are not unaware of the existence of evil in life. This stubborn fact cannot be denied. What man can do in this world of conflicts is to lead a life of growth and evolution. Perfection would perhaps never be attained by man, but no one can be apathetic to the creed of development. We daily attain perfection and health by the ever-enduring process of perfection. Happiness is the criterion of the value of human life, pleasure is not the standard but a life of love and service where we daily enrich and perfect our lives through our failures and defects.

As a Hindu I hail the mystic love of the Avesta and I fondly hope that this forgotten Bhargava Veda will take its rightful place among the vast body of our sacred literature. It could be a source both of curious delight and ennobling inspiration.

Dr. Motilal Das

THE ROLE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY IN INDIA'S REGENERATION

The purpose of the Theosophical Society, which was founded in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, can only be properly understood by studying the world conditions prevailing at the time of its foundation. When scientific men of the renaissance period attempted to redeem science from the field of speculation and to place it on the experimental and observational basis, the freedom to express the results of their experiments was stifled by priests, particularly when they went against the views held by the church. Many scientists were brought before the Inquisition and punished, and some were even burnt at the stake. At that time the popular support was on the side of the Church; but after many brilliant scientific discoveries that dazzled the eyes of the people and provided physical comforts to them, the common people shifted their support from the Church to science. Now came the turn of the scientist to dominate over the priest and Church. The common man however always exaggerated the achievements and ignored the limitations of science, and he took all statements by the scientist as based on direct experiment and observation. When the scientist, on the other hand, found that they could mechanically explain certain class of phenomena, in his arrogance, he extended that kind of explanation to the phenomena of life and consciousness. Physiology usurped the domain of Psychology, and thought was assumed either to be a secretion of the brain or as a silent speech. It were generally considered to have more solid foundation. The subjects dealt with in science and the results arrived

tion, being verified by repeated observations than those in Philosophy and Religion. But in science many of the results were not obtained from direct observation but by calculations with the help of hypothetical laws from observed quantities. Science should not have been called observational but hypothetico-observational, as suggested by Eddington. The arrogant attitude of the scientist reached its climax after, the researches of Darwin (1807-82), Huxley (1825-95), Tyndall (1820-93) and Herbert Spencer (1820-1903), who enunciated the doctrine of Evolution by combining Lyell's explanation of the development of Earth's Crust, Lamarck's Transformism and Laplace's Nebular hypothesis. In the British Association Meeting in 1874 Tyndall said:—

"Sciences would one day be able to envisage and to explain all that happened and does happen in terms of the ultimately purely natural and inevitable march of evolution from the atoms of the primordial nebula to the proceedings of the British Association for the Cultivation of Science."

Madame Blavatsky has written in the Introduction to *Isis Unveiled* about Tyndall, (Vol. I., p. xiii)—

"Mr. Tyndall, as the mouth-piece of the nineteenth century science says, '....the impregnable position of science may be stated in a few words; we claim and we shall wrest from theology the entire domain of cosmological theory.'"

Thus was firmly established in the West the scientific materialism, which rapidly spread to India and swallowed intact by many of the intelligentsia of that age.

There was a general degeneration of all major religions of the world. Instead of helping to increase the sense of unity between the followers of the different religions, the religions served to widen the gap between their followers. Instead of emphasising the esotericism, they mechanically followed the rounds of rites and ceremonies

which had developed as crusts round the kernel of inner fundamental principles by additions depending upon local customs. Instead of acting as binding principles these religions served, as they are even now serving, as separative principles. The common essentials of all religions were lost sight of and undue emphasis was given to their inessentials.

Modern Western Psychism, although commenced with Swedenborg (1688-1772) when he had special astral vision in 1710, received its fresh and special impetus from 31st March 1848, when Kate Fox's challenge was first accepted by some unseen agent. Psychical phenomena began to be studied by many prominent persons, including some eminent scientific men. In 1874, Sir William Crookes submitted to the Royal Society, the results of his investigations with Miss Cook as the medium. In that year many wonderful phenomena happened in the Eddy Farm House of Chittenden, near Rutland in Vermont (U.S.A.). Many people believed in psychical phenomena and some shrewd persons began to cheat people in various ways taking advantage of the credulity of the common man.

Such was the condition of the world in the middle of the nineteenth century. It is said in Gita—"whenever there is decay of righteousness, O Bharata, and the exaltation of unrighteousness, then I myself come forth for the sake of the protection of the good and the destruction of evil-doers. For the sake of firmly establishing righteousness I am born from age to age."

We find that many prophets appeared in different ages among different nations in order to re-proclaim the Ancient Wisdom in a way suitable to the age and the people. The Eternal Brahmanvidya is in the custody of the hierarchy of Adepts (Rishis) and the great Rishis always decide when and in what form is it to be re-proclaimed. It is said in Svetasvatara Upanishad—"Under the austerities practised and by the grace to the gods,

Swetaswata rightly proclaimed to the Sannyasis, the perfectly pure Brahmagvidya which had always been in the custody of hierarchy of Rishis." Special notice should be taken of adjunct 'in the custody of hierarchy of Rishis,' which signifies that the Divine Wisdom is always preserved by the Hierarchy of Adepts.

For the modern scientific age and for all peoples of the present age, the Eternal Ancient Brahmagvidya has been re-proclaimed as Theosophy by the Great Rishis, through their distinguished and special disciples, Col. Henry Steel Olcott and Madame Helena Petrovna Blavatsky.

Two influential American papers, Daily Graphic and New York Sun, appointed Col. Olcott to investigate personally the phenomena at the Eddy House and to send regular reports to them as to the truth or otherwise of the psychic phenomena. Col. Olcott went to the Eddy House on the 17th September, 1874, and remained there till the end of next November, when he returned to New York. Madame Blavatsky, who had been in U.S.A. since July 1873, arrived at the Eddy House on the 14th October 1874, on which date the two Founders of the Theosophical Society met for the first time in their present incarnations.

In May 1874, Col. Olcott attempted to form a "Miracle Club," but this failed. On the 7th September 1875, after Mr. Felt, the Egyptologist, finished his lecture, Col. Olcott rose to propose a vote of thanks when he thought it would be a good thing to form a Society for such studies and wrote his suggestion in a slip of paper and passed it on to Madame Blavatsky, through W. Q. Judge. She nodded assent when Col. Olcott formally proposed for the formation of a Society. His resolution was unanimously adopted and a provisional committee was immediately formed with the Colonel as the President and Mr. Judge as the Secretary for framing a constitution. The next meeting of the committee was held on the 18th

September, 1875, when the preamble and the bye-laws were reported and adopted. The name of the Society was selected and the office bearers were elected, on the 30th October, 1875. The Society was first conceived on the 8th Sept. and was formally perfected on the 17th November, 1875, on which latter date Col. Olcott delivered his inaugural address.

The organisation was started with 16 members only with the object "to collect and diffuse a knowledge of the laws which govern the universe." It has now branches practically in all countries of the world and its present first object is "to form a nucleus of the universal brotherhood of humanity without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour." Instead of making the acceptance of 'Theosophy' as given in the Theosophical literature, the belief in the brotherhood of humanity, inspite of all outer differences has been made compulsory for the membership of the society. The ultimate purpose of the Society, being the eradication of materialism and lifeless superstition from all existing religions, the main emphasis is laid on the principle of 'solidarity of man' based on that of Immanence of God.

The Headquarters of the Society was transferred to India in 1879, when the Society began to function more effectively in this country. The first Theosophical lecture in Calcutta was delivered by Col. Olcott on 1st April, 1882, at the Baithakhana Palace of Maharaja Jatindra Mohan Tagore, who was the convener of the meeting. The meeting was presided over by Peary Chand Mitra, popularly known as Tenk Chand Thakur and attended by the elite of the town. During the presidential address Peary Chand welcomed Col. Olcott as dearly loved brother and said, "Although the Colonel is of American extraction and the gentlemen present are all Hindus, still they are brothers in the true sense of the term as the Colonel is really a Hindu in sympathy, appreciation and

spiritual conception. They are in full sympathy with the Colonel about establishing the Theosophical Society. It is for the true religious end that the Founders (Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott) have been striving. Spiritualism, Occultism and Theosophy had all flourished in India. But the study of the Western materialistic sciences took their places, and they are grateful to God that the light which the *Rishis* had shed, is being rekindled by H. P. Blavatsky and Col. Olcott."

Western scientific materialism and agnosticism had spread in this country and were accepted by all those who were educated in the Western system. Vyas and Vasistha were displaced by Huxley, Tyndall and Spencer. Rites and ceremonies developed among common men depending on local customs and gathered round the true light of religions, many of which lost their touch with the inner esoteric principles and thus became lifeless. These accretions were different with different religions. Laying stress on these inessential accretions, the followers of the sectarian religions became antagonistic to one another. There was too much mutual bickering, because each sect considered his own sectarian religion as the only true religion and looked at others either as pseudo-religions or as false religions. When the Theosophical Society started its work in this country there were several religious reformers, trying to start new methods of worship which had the effect of increasing the number of sects quarrelling with one another. But Paramhansa Ramkrishna and Acharya Bijoykrishna, recognising all religions as so many paths to liberation, advised religious toleration to the disciples and Acharya Bijoy Krishna definitely enjoined that his disciples must not form a new sect with himself as the centre. How far his disciples have acted according to the advice of their preceptor remains to be seen. The Theosophical Society has not introduced any new religion and its membership is open to followers of all faiths, and

even to atheists, provided they accept the principle of brotherhood. Theosophy presents the common fundamental principles of all religions and requires its members to dive to the rockbottom of their own religions and there they will recognise the essential unity of all religions. In an open letter to the Archbishop of Canterbury, Madame Blavatsky wrote in 1887—"Theosophy is not a religion but a philosophy at once religious and scientific, and the chief work so far of the Theosophical Society has been to revive in each religion its own animating spirit, by encouraging and helping enquiry into the true significance of its doctrines and observances."

After the founders landed in India they undertook a long tour, throughout the length and breadth of the country, coming in contact with many influential persons of different learned professions. When they were shown splendid libraries of Western literature, philosophy etc., they invariably wanted to be shown their collections of Eastern scriptures and philosophies. Many of the eminent persons frankly admitted that they had few books on those subjects. This was one of the ways in which the founders tried to direct their respectful attention to the ancient scriptures and literature of this country.

Supernormal phenomena, such as, thought transference, clairvoyance, clairaudience, levitation, apport etc., which cannot be explained from the laws of Physical Science, have their beneficial effects on the minds of those who do not believe in anything not perceived by the sense organs (supersensuous), if they be convinced of the genuineness of the phenomena. Mrs. Besant resigned her membership of the National Secular Society, of which she was the Vice-President, after being convinced of the truth of some of the above supernormal phenomena and joined the Theosophical Society. With the above object in view, Madame Blavatsky on special occasions, gave demonstrations of some of her supernormal powers.

when Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott were welcomed at Benares by the Society of Pundits in December 1879, at a special meeting presided over by G. Thibault and attended by eminent scholars like Promoda Das Mitra (the great Vedantist), and when Principal Thibault reported to Madame Blavatsky that the Pundits were saying that although there was mention of Yogic powers in their shastras and that there has been Yogis who could make a shower of roses in a hall like the one in which the meeting was held, such Yogis were not to be then found, Blavatsky sat up in her chair and burst out, "Oh, they say that, do they? They say no one can do it now? Well, I'll show them; and you may tell them from me that if Modern Hindus were less sycophant to their Western Masters and more like their ancestors in many ways they would not have to make such a humiliating confession and to get an Western hyppopotamus of a woman to prove the truth of their shastras." Then she waved her hand and about a dozen roses dropped from the ceiling on the heads of the company.

In October 1880 Mr. A. P. Sinnet, the Editor of "The Pioneer," arranged a picnic, on one of the hills in Simla. At the last moment one more person joined the party and one more tea-cup would be necessary for the new addition. On the way, Major Henderson was asked by Madame Blavatsky to dig at a certain place to find a tea-cup and saucer to match those they were carrying and a set of cup and saucer was dug out. Seeing this supernatural phenomenon Major Henderson agreed to join the Society if his diploma could then and there be handed over to him, when he was asked to search for it at the bottom of a cedar tree. The diploma was found by him complete with the signature of Col. Olcott with a letter in the hand writing of Col. Olcott attached to it. Madame Blavatsky attracted many persons to the Society by giving demonstrations of her extra-ordinary powers, while

Col. Olcott did so by curing over 2,000 sick persons in Bengal alone by passes and with water charmed by mystic formulae and thus formed Theosophical Lodges practically in all towns with the most prominent persons as Presidents and Secretaries.

For truly religious men and Yogis, these supernormal powers and wonderful cures are of very little importance and they never run after them, rather they come in proper time as obedient servants and they rarely give demonstrations of their powers. On very special occasions they may show their powers to serve some purpose which cannot be done through ordinary means. Ordinarily when a person approaches a Yogi to be convinced of the existence of supernormal things and principles, invariably he is turned back with the answer, 'It is no business of mine to convince you of the truth of such existence.'

Madame Blavatsky and Col. Olcott directed their activities mainly for the revival of the Ceylon Buddhism. (Hinayana Buddhism). They went to Ceylon in May 1880 and on 25th May, they both took Pancha Sila at Galle and thus formally became Buddhists. Col. Olcott wrote a small pamphlet, "Buddhist Catechism" and introduced it in the schools after getting it formally approved as to its accuracy by the Buddhist High Priest, Hikkadume Sumangala, for the purpose of teaching the fundamentals of Buddhism to Singhalese boys and girls. This book passed through 44 editions in 24 years (up to 1925). During his second visit to Ceylon, Col. Olcott was helped in his work by Bishop C. W. Leadbeater and by H. Dharmapala. Anagarika Dharmapala accompanied Col. Olcott in 1889, in his tour in Japan and other Buddhist countries outside India. Colonel became the first President of the Maha Bodhi Society and contacted the India and Bengal Governments for the transfer of the shrine at Buddha Gaya from the Mahants, the Hindu Priest, to the newly formed Buddhist Society. Inciden-

tally it may be mentioned that in the same year, Bishop Leadbeater recognised in Singhalese boy of 13 years, his brother Gerald who had died while very young in an accident, reborn. He picked up and took the boy with him to England where he went as a guardian tutor of Mrs. Sinnett's son. Bishop trained the Singhalese boy and got him admitted into the University of Cambridge to obtain his M.A. degree. This boy is now the President of the Theosophical Society, Mr. C. Jinarajadasa.

The attempt for the revival of Hinduism was made by Mr. A. P. Sinnett, when he published his book entitled "Esoteric Buddhism" (Buddhism means Wisdom), in which the fundamental principles of Hinduism were explained with the help of reason. Mrs. Besant, immediately after her arrival in India in November, 1893, devoted herself entirely for the revival of Hindu Religion and Culture. She studied the *shastras* in original with the help of learned Pundits, published several small pamphlets and delivered lectures to explain the true Ancient Wisdom. She did not commence her work by criticising image worship and the caste system of the Hindus. She firmly believed that the true light of religion would cause the darkness of lifeless superstition to disappear, even when no criticism was made against them. In her lectures, she explained the natural basis of the caste system, but she showed also very clearly its present degeneration and confusion. A mistake that is commonly made by many reformers is that they start by inviting opposition by their criticism of long practised rites and ceremonies. Such criticism provokes opposition and makes the task of the reformer much more difficult. In many of her books, she profusely quoted from Upanishads, giving literal translations and correct references. She has written several hundreds of books, explaining the ethics, philosophies and religions as may be found in ancient

scriptures of India, of which special mention may be made of—

(1) Ancient Wisdom, (2) Study in consciousness, (3) Self and its Sheaths, (4) Introduction to Yoga, (5) Evolution of Life and form, (6) Path of Discipleship, (7) Wisdom of Upanishads, (8) Thought Power, its control and Culture etc., etc.

Directed by her preceptor, Mrs. Besant undertook the work of Educational, Religious, Social and Political regeneration of India. She was one of the best orators of her time and when in 1893, she delineated the bright past and still brighter future of India and compared them with the then present dark and degenerated condition obtaining in the country, she made the whole audience of over a thousand weep with emotion. With a view to revive the religious discipline of the country, she started the Central Hindu College at Benares in 1898, most of the students of which were boarders, who were given special religious discipline to be followed and in the boarding only pure vegetarian dishes were served. Special attention was paid to the physical and moral culture of the pupils in addition to their intellectual training. She used to mix freely with the students and answered all their questions in a convincing way, supporting them with quotations from scriptures. Under her guidance, the Board of Trustees of the College published a Text-book of Hindu Religion and Morals, in which the bases of Hindu rites and ceremonies were lucidly explained. The motto selected for the College was—"Vidya-Dharmena Shovate"—knowledge is embellished by religion. Thinking that the purpose of the revival of religious discipline would be better served, Mrs. Besant influenced the members of the Board of Trustees to hand over the College to the authorities of the Hindu University to serve as its initial nucleus. There is no doubt that the contribution of the Theosophical Society will compare

favourably with those of other reformers who had been working in the same direction.

Some theosophists were of opinion that unless India attained her proper respectful position in the committee of nations, her voice in bringing about the international understanding in the light of the Ancient Wisdom, would be one in the wilderness. Political uplift was, therefore, considered as essential as the religious and social. For the attainment of this object, the Theosophical Society inspired the Indian National Congress, whose seed was sown during the annual Theosophical Convention of 1884. Allan Octavius Hume was the Vice-President of the Theosophical Society from 1880 to 1898 and he, it was who influenced by Adepts, broached the idea of forming the Congress at an informal meeting of 17 influential persons of different Provinces of India held in the house of Dewan Bahadur Raghunath Rao of Madras. (The names of these 17 persons have been quoted by Mrs. Besant in "How India Wrought for Freedom" from the Indian Mirror).

On returning to their respective Provinces, those leaders worked for holding the first open session of the Congress during the next Christmas holidays. The session was held in Bombay on 25th December 1885, presided over by W. C. Banerjee and attended by 72 delegats from different Provinces. For many years, Mr. A. O. Hume served as the General Secretary of the Congress and worked for the political regeneration of India for which he was, and by some still is, called the Father of the National Congress.

Early in 1914, Mrs. Besant received fresh instructions to work for gaining India's proper place among the nations but was warned not to be provocative although remaining firm in her determination. In January of the same year she started a weekly magazine, "common-

weal," for the purpose of propaganda; she also commenced to convene regular conferences of Theosophical workers to organise her activities for National regeneration along four lines—religious, educational, social and political, corresponding to the four constitutions of man, spirit, mind, emotion and physical body. She next purchased the *Madras Standard* and renamed it '*New India*,' the first number of which was issued on July 14, 1914. She also started the Home Rule League in which she could attract the prominent workers of all parties. Even Mr. M. A. Jinnah joined the League and was elected the President of the Bombay Branch of the League. At this time she inaugurated the Madras Parliament with herself as the Premier, to train the citizens in parliamentary methods.

On June 1917, the Madras Government issued orders, for the externment of Mrs. Besant, G. S. Arundale and B. P. Wadia from Madras and Chingleput (which included Adyar) and in a few days they took their residence in Ootacamund. This externment produced an intense indignation both in India and in England, as a result of which they were released unconditionally on the 15th September, 1917. That same year, Mrs. Besant was elected the President of the National Congress, held in Calcutta and she was accorded a tremendous ovation by the public on her arrival in Calcutta. The political plan of Mrs. Besant was that India should be strong and equal to the dominions of England and with England herself, and that an Indo-British Commonwealth of Nations would be formed in which India would play a very important part so far as the maintenance of peace in Asia was concerned. Now we find that the trend of events is towards the retention of connections with Britain and the Dominions. Thus Mrs. Besant's idea is going to be fulfilled.

Educational Activities. Col. Olcott established a

large number of schools in Ceylon to redeem Singhalese boys and girls from Missionary schools and to educate them according to Buddhistic tradition and culture. In India, he founded a free school for the Panchama (Madras untouchable) boys, called Olcott School in Madras in 1894. Here the pupils and teachers have been from the beginning of all castes and creeds and they have been happily mingling with one another as members of one family, thus striking at the root of untouchability. This was followed by the founding in 1898 of a second school, called H. P. B. School, at Kodambakam, (7½ miles from Adyar), a third (Damodar School) in October, 1899 at Teynampet, a fourth at Mylapore (Madras) in 1901 and a fifth (Annie Besant School) at Krishnampet in May, 1906. All these free schools are managed by a Board by raising funds by donations and a small grant from the Madras Corporation. As already mentioned Mrs. Besant started the Central Hindu College at Benares for the physical, moral and intellectual training of Indian pupils which was supplemented by religious discipline. There were a girls' school and a girls' College established at Benares. Several other schools and colleges run by Theosophists have been made over to the Theosophical Educational Trust started and registered with Mrs. Besant as the President. A large number of selfless members such as, Dr. Richardson, Dr. Arundale, Miss Arundale, Mr. Harry Banbery, Miss Palmer, Miss Courtwright, Miss Kofel etc., etc., helped Col. Olcott and Mrs. Besant in their educational activities. These workers undertook the work as religious duties receiving only subsistence allowances. In connection with the educational work of the Society, special mention must be made of the Adyar Library, which has two sections, the Eastern section containing, a large number of Eastern books and manuscripts and having a staff of Sanskrit Scholars and the other, the Western Section with books in Western

languages. The Adyar manuscript library is probably the best of its kind in India.

Thus we find that the founders and other members of the Society have taken a prominent part in reviving Buddhism and Hinduism and in bringing about fraternity between men and religions inspite of all outer differences. The Congress movement has been initiated and the first step in the removal of untouchability has also been taken by them. They have worked for introducing female education and for raising the marriageable ages of boys and girls, and have played their part in all modern reform movements. Even the first exhibition of Indian goods, (Swadeshi Exhibition) was organised by the Society as early as 1879, during its fourth anniversary convention. Indians should be grateful to those foreign members of the Society who have unselfishly helped India to attain her present position.

TULSIDAS KAR.

SRI AUROBINDO. A MYSTIC OR A PHILOSOPHER ?

Sri Aurobindo is perhaps the singular personality who represents what India stands for. A nation lives neither by its people nor by its strength, nor by its material glory, but by its contribution to the world thought. The living philosophy of India concentrated in the moth worn pages of Vedas and Upanisads once more takes revival in the volumes of the Seer Prophet Sri Aurobindo. The unique spiritual heritage of India, takes a peculiar blending with what may be called the essence of modern materialistic thought in the writings of Sri Aurobindo. Indeed he represents "a completest synthesis that has been realised to this day of the genius of Asia and the genius of Europe." But still he imbibes the true spirit of the Indian soil, representing it in its exact colour and nowhere does he deviate from his path by any external influence.

There is a considerable divergence of opinion among great scholars of east as well as west regarding the question—whether Sri Aurobindo was a mystic or a philosopher. Leaving aside at present of the very few western scholars who have called him so either conventionally or due to their lack of a thorough study of the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, we shall discuss the subject considering the opinion of the Indian critics. By the former, I mean the conventional way in which the charges against the Indian Philosophy are generally carried on by the western scholars who have never called, until lately, the Indian systems as having any philosophical tinge in it, except mysticism and religion. Such unwarranted view is of course gradually diminishing with the

advent of some forceful defenders, of whom the name of Sir Sarvapalli follows the rest. By the latter, I mean those half-hearted western scholars who read our philosophy only to make sure of their scholarship, but little do they understand, for a thorough understanding of the philosophical treatises of Sri Aurobindo, Tagore and others pre-supposes a vast learning of something other than their own systems of philosophy. Due to this lack of previous learning, their understanding of the Indian philosophers is naturally superficial and conclusion defect-ridden.

But we cannot neglect the views of the Indian critics who do not acknowledge him as a philosopher but only as a mystic. Even there is a tendency among the Indian scholars of our day, very often observed, who ignore him so much so for his mystic outlook in philosophy, that they do not think it worthwhile to give him an ordinary chair to sit among other philosophers, far more inferior than him in scholarship, mental make-up and creative thinking.*

A slight reflection will tell us that, at the bottom of this peculiar disregard for mysticism there lies the age-old quarrel between rational and intuitive knowledge. The two rival schools founded on this basis have a historical role in their fighting with each other. Naturally, the representatives of the school who regard reason and intelligence as the only source of knowledge despise the other group who have faith in a still higher source of knowledge than intelligence and declare that we can know so many things of the world as revealed through our faculty of intuition. This intuitive knowledge of a supra-mental character has been accepted by Sri Aurobindo, and hence he is regarded by some as a mystic and not a philosopher.

* Here I may refer the volume, "Contemporary Indian Philosophy" edited by S. RADHAKRISHNAN AND J. H. MUIRHEAD, in which Sri Aurobindo has been neglected, perhaps intentionally.

Sri Aurobindo being himself an oriental scholar, having deep and wide knowledge of the Vedas and the Upanisads and other sanskrit texts, can not but accept such a faculty in human beings. The typical word DARSANA indicates that in India, Philosophy was not merely an intellectual gratification and the satisfaction of man's restless curiosity, but it is revelation. The philosophical and metaphysical truths in our systems are always considered to be revealed in mystic visions and they were never pursued after in a rational way and Indians never dreamt of knowing them intellectually. ज्ञानम् मोक्ष never meant in Indian philosophy as "emancipation through knowledge." The word ज्ञान has a special meaning in our systems. It is not merely intellectual knowledge but also intuitive one. But it should be noted that because the word has an intuitive reference, the intellectual side was not totally neglected. They both co-operate and run hand in hand along the path for progress. The Upanisads never deny reason at the cost of intuition and vice-versa. As Radhakrishnan puts it, "The results of intellect will be dull and empty, unfinished and fragmentary without the help of intuition, while intuitional insights will be blind and dumb, dark and strange without intellectual confirmation." But this much is sure that the Indian scholars have full faith in intuitive knowledge and they never deny its necessity.

‘एतत्ते त्वया बुद्धौ सूक्ष्माभिः सूक्ष्मदृष्टिभिः’

This बुद्धि i.e., sharpened intellect is nothing but that intuitive faculty. It is by this faculty that we can know the Reality in its essential aspects.

Similar trends do we observe in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo.

Perhaps the most controversial issue in his philosophy lies in the fact that how does he conceive the relationship between reason and intuition? And if this controversy is

settled, so many misconceptions on his philosophy are also decided. On this issue lies the peculiar disregard for him as a mystic. If he is proved to be not an anti-intellectualist, not a direct reaction against modern science, but a way-finder to those, who with their extreme scientific prejudices have become a bit sceptic to the greatest truth of this world, he may certainly be given the leadership of philosophy, who with his deep and comprehensive knowledge of reality, might lead the world to the blissful land and thus change the unfortunate lot of the humanity. Truly, he is the philosopher, who has grasped the fundamentals of true philosophy; he is the optimist, who loves humanity with all his sincerity and promises a bright future for it; he is the leader, who leads philosophy to the right channel and sheds all our previous misconceptions.

Ordinarily, mysticism is considered to be a standing reproach to all science and philosophy. Due to the mystic's peculiar method of knowledge, and the impossibility of the objective test of the mystic revelations, together with the varying conclusions of the different mystics, it has certainly become not only a standing reproach but a regular hindrance to all true philosophy. This much is acceptable.

As regards the first difficulty, if the intuitive faculty of knowledge is proved to be not anti-intellectualistic, we have got nothing to say against it. But if it means some sort of sub-conscious upheaval of an unbalanced mind or the outcome of repeated auto-suggestions, we have got certainly objections against it. So far as the question of objective certainty in mysticism is concerned, its usefulness can never be denied. Mysticism needs scrutiny. Mere subjective certainty can not ascertain the truth of mysticism. In that case, it will lose all its influence over humanity. It can not be the result of subjective fancy. So it should not be regarded as criminal to scrutinize the

mystic experience. Now let us come to the third difficulty. It is very often found that different mystics vary in their description of experiences. The most easy answer to it is perhaps that of Bergson,* who says that even in objective experiences people often differ and what to say of subjective ones. Men with varied pre-conceptions and angles of vision not very infrequently differ among themselves. The similar may be urged for the mystics. But, this is perhaps not the real and exact cause of the varied experiences that we get from the pens of various mystics. The true reason is that there are different levels of mysticism; and the experiences of these levels vary considerably. Sri Aurobindo himself admits of these levels. There is "a zone which many Sadhakas have to cross in which many wander for a long time and out of which a great many never emerge"†. He also speaks of different degrees of intuition—higher mind, illumined mind, intuition, over mind and super mind. Similar distinction in the mystic zone has also been acknowledged by Bergson when he gives in his "Two Sources Of Morality And Religion," a detailed description of mysticism.

Now, mysticism which is not anti-intellectualistic and intuitive at the same time, which admits of objective tests, not only of the subjective certainty and the experiences of which though vary considerably but which have the same source and origin and a similar colour, stands above the charges and blames that are generally levelled against it. That mysticism can never be a standing reproach to science and philosophy. Philosophy must accept it and science must embrace it.

Before we try to find out the place of reason and intuition in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, it will be wise on our part to put a cursory glance on the exact meaning of

* Vide Bergson's "Two Sources Of Morality and Religion" Page.

†34. Sri Aurobindo. "Riddle of this world" Page. 59.

the term intuition. For, there are philosophers who are not so much prejudiced against the conclusions and results that we derive through the intuitive source of knowledge, as they are against the faculty of knowledge itself. They object to the words intuition and mysticism, because, according to them, these words have some religious tinge in them, and they do not represent the true scientific bent of mind. Of course, what they mean by true scientific bent of mind is nothing but a mind full of scientific superstitions. Hence an endeavour to find out what exactly the term intuition means may remove the scientific bias and pure mysticism free from all difficulties may find favour with all schools of philosophy.

The most simple manner in which we may explain the term intuition is that it is a self-evident knowledge. Self-evidence is its fundamental characteristic. Every knowledge in this world which is evident from itself can be called intuitive. And if we stop for a moment and reflect over, we shall find that the major part of our knowledge is intuitive in its character. We base our monuments of reason on some self-reveled axioms. All our sense knowledge begins with intuition and reason comes therein afterwards. Similar is the case with inferential and all practical knowledge whose certainty we can not deny for they are self-evident. That the straight line has only length and no breadth, that all hard and green apples are sour and that things identical in essence must have identical attributes are never questioned. Practically the basic construction of our knowledge is intuitive. Reason comes afterwards and systematizes those unsystematic knowledge which we take for granted for the practical purposes of our life. But the role of intuition is the most important when we rise above these worldly phenomena and reach the realm of philosophy. The unfortunate thing is this that we accept the role of intuition so far the worldly knowledge is concerned but we

hesitate to accept its importance in the philosophical realm. Our knowledge begins with intuition and its conclusion lies there. Reason comes in and serves the intermediary purpose to collect, arrange and systematise it. In the realm of philosophy, intuition stands behind as well as before.

Now, let us come to Sri Aurobindo's conceptions of intuition and see what part reason plays in his philosophy. There has been still a great deal of obscurity in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, partly because of his abstract manner of writing and partly because of the misinterpretations among his critics.

Sri Aurobindo in his philosophy makes a clear-cut distinction between mental and supramental knowledge. In the mental sphere, reason or intellect is supreme but in the supramental sphere, we rise above reason and know things directly and immediately by a special faculty, which may be called as intuition. Although, we may assert that whatever we know in this higher realm, we know it by our intuitive knowledge, yet the term intuition in his philosophy is only the name of a particular grade in the supramental sphere. It has been already said that Sri Aurobindo admits different grades in the higher knowledge, which he names as—higher mind, illumined mind, intuition, over mind and super mind. And, the specific term intuition, occupies the third place in the supramental realm.

So, it is better not to call the whole of the supramental sphere by the term intuition for that will create a confusion. We shall rather call the two realms of knowledge as mental and supramental.

As regards the relative value of these two kinds of knowledge, it may be definitely asserted that Sri Aurobindo gives higher place to the supramental knowledge which we otherwise call as intuition. If Philosophy

is after the search of Reality or the Supreme Truth, Sri Aurobindo repeatedly tells us that it can not know it by intellect. "If the intellect is our highest possible instrument and there is no other means of arriving at supra-physical Truth, then a wise and large Agnosticism must be our ultimate attitude. Things in the manifestation may be known to some degree but the supreme and all that is beyond the Mind must remain forever unknowable."^{*} The result of the intellectual approach to the Supreme Reality has always been either agnosticism or some mind constructed formula. "There have been," he says, "hundreds of these systems or formulas and there can be hundreds more."^{*} So the intellectual approach to reality will be a vague and partial one. Intellect can never enter the heart of reality for its inherent weakness. The natural division which it creates in its effort to know raises a permanent bar to final realization. It requires a decisive experience, a spiritual certitude and a direct approach.

The most remarkable point in Sri Aurobindo, perhaps the singular representative of the intuitive school, is that he endeavours to establish his theory of intuition by the reference of modern scientific researches and experiments in this field. The establishment of the "Society for the Psychical Research" in the west and the profuse interest of the great philosophic and scientific minds in it, has minimised the task to a great extent, for those who belong to the school of intuition. Regarding intuition he says, "Constantly asserted by human experience and beliefs since the origin of thought, this truth.....begins to be justified by the new born forms of scientific research," "The increasing evidences of which only the most obvious and outward are established, come to us under the name of Telepathy."^{*} As a matter of fact, there is

^{*} Sri Aurobindo, "Riddle of this World," Page, 25-26.

^{*} Ibid, Page, 25.

^{*} Sri Aurobindo, "Life Divine" Vol. I, Page, 27.

very little controversy now regarding the certitude of this Telepathy. It is a matter of common experience that one mind can communicate impressions to another mind independent of any recognized channels of sense. Thousands of experiments under fully controlled conditions together with the convincing evidences of daily life have left no room for doubt even in the sceptic minds. We may certainly call it by the name of intuition.

This, certainly reveals that Sri Aurobindo, although gives a higher place for the supramental faculty in human beings, is never blind to the intellectual advancements or scientific researches. He has full confidence in them. He is never an anti-intellectualist. He has spoken so many times that reason occasionally comes to the aid of intuition. "Intuition is unable to give us the truth in that ordered and articulated form which our nature demands." That is done by reason. The function of reason is to systematise those unsystematic truths that we get by the flow of intuition, and thereby fill up their gaps and join their weak links. In his "Nature and Function of Thought in Sri Aurobindo's Philosophy," Dr. S. K. Maitra, makes the point clear when he says that, "Periods in the world history are generally classed as creative and constructive. The creative periods are characterised by rich flow of intuition. But they generally lack the power to integrate these intuitions and build them into stable structures.....The legacy of the intuitions which the creative periods have left is utilized in the constructive periods for the erection of gigantic systems;.....the building of these systems is entirely the work of thought." Sri Aurobindo himself in his "Life Divine," Vol. 1, says that "the age of intuitive knowledge represented by the early Vedantic thinking of the Upanishads had to give place to the age of rational knowledge, inspired scriptures made room for metaphysical philosophy, even as after-

* Sri Aurobindo, "Life Divine" Vol. 1, Page. 202.

wards metaphysical philosophy had to give place to experimental science."^a

Thus, it is quite evident that Sri Aurobind assigns the true place to rational and scientific knowledge, although he admits the validity of intuition. In matters of science, he is a scientist out and out; and in matters of higher knowledge, he is a prophet out and out. We have seen that he gives the experimental evidences in psychic phenomena as the background for his theory of intuition; but like a true scientist, he is very critical in matter of his acceptance of anything and everything that go by the name of psychic science. He acknowledges the defects and unscientific prejudices that still hover over its field of enquiry." It is true that the glimpses of supraphysical realities acquired by methodical research has been imperfect and is yet ill-affirmed, for the methods used are still crude and defective."^b

Similarly, when he speaks of supramental knowledge, he is none but a prophet. He can not forget his oriental lineage although he has imbibed all that is best in western thought and culture. Here he is a different man he quotes Vedas and Upanisads as evidences (प्रमाण) of his supramental knowledge, just like Sankar and other oriental scholars.

Thus we see that Sri Aurobindo is a devout worshipper of the supramental knowledge and still he can never be called a mystic in the general sense of the term. He is a true philosopher, if we translate the term as दार्शनिक. His is the most practical and living philosophy; and if because of this practical and living nature, he is called a mystic, we have got nothing to say against it. His mysticism, if we call it so, has some remarkable traits in it, and that is why Sri Aurobindo can not be ranked among ordinary mystics. It is not the mysticism of the

^a Ibid., page, 109.

^b Sri Aurobindo, "Life Divine," Vol. 1, Page, 24.

individual saints who try to rise individually to the supramental plane and naturally can not bring anything down and make it a permanent part of the earth consciousness. It is not the mysticism of the Upanisads, which asserts that it is impossible to pass through the gates of sun (i.e., supramental plane) with this body. But it is the mysticism of YOGA where physical and supraphysical meet. It is a double movement of ascent and descent. This mysticism promises not an individual but a cosmic salvation—a thorough transformation of earth consciousness into supermind. It is free from all those charges that are levelled against the so-called mysticism. It is never opposed to reason and intellect; it is never fleeting and evanescent for in the supramental plane, the higher knowledge is permanent; and it is not confined to subjective certainty but it admits of objective validity, for "the less perfect intuition must be corrected by the more perfect." His philosophy then, can never be called mysticism as we ordinarily understand and be ignored. It is the living philosophy, the practical one-truly keeping to the Indian heritage. If Indians can ignore their own philosophical systems as non-philosophical and mystical, they may do so with Sri Aurobindo; but if they acknowledge these systems as consisting of any philosophical value, they can not disregard the contribution of Sri Aurobindo.

ABHOY CHANDRA BHATTACHARYA, M.A.

THE SIDDHAS IN THE YOGA- VASISTHA RAMAYANA AND A PEEP INTO THEIR CREED

The part that the *Yogavasistha Ramayana* played in the unfolding of the philosophical temperament in the average Indian generally and in the proper assessment of material pleasures and of the perpetual encroachings of *tr̥sna* (hankerings after worldly enjoyments) and *moha* (ignorance) particularly as in the famous epoch-making works the *Bhagavad-gita* and the *Dhammapada* has been but imperfectly recognised. The limitations of this encyclopoedic work—a *sastramrtajaladhi*—which has been differently and quite aptly described as a *kaūya* (poetical exercise), and a *prabandha* (at best a philosophical thesis) in *prakaranas* or sections dealing with topics in a non-technical and popular fashion—told out in the *pauranic* framework of a *samvada* are as much to account for this as the non-academic or rather the non-scholastic treatment, which has fought shy of the logical methodology and of precision in technique, the cornerstones of a philosophical system. Indeed while we have a clear and consistent under-current of affiliation to a recognised mode of thought—and this is nothing but the Śaiva (Spanda) system of Kashmir—the digressions and deflections are so many varied and various that the attempt at a systematic co-ordination has been subdued and subordinated so much so that the general reader is to be pardoned if he thinks that there is no system in this philosophy or that at best it is a presentation of several systems with no emphasis on a particular line of

śidhanta. The traditional scholar has been mesmerised by the common trend of the literature on the subject which has been canalised at least from about the 14th century A.C. amongst an influential section of *saṃnyasiṃ* teachers, affiliated to the Sankara school of monistic Vedantic thought that has not felt any scruples in extending the scope of the work and elaborating it.¹ (The *uttarardha* of the *Nirvana prakarana* is a palpable and transparent proof thereof). But the ingenious and unconvincing attempts of these expositors right up from the time of *Vignānottamacārya* (hinted at in folio 7b of the *Utpatti prakarana* of the printed text of the *Y. V. Saṃgraha*, (a work inadequately described as a synopsis or a summary), are the *Laghu-Yogavaiṣṭha* or the *Vaiṣiṭhasāra* and even of earlier authoritative scholars (folio 13b, *Utpatti*) down to the eminent *Ananda-bodhendra Sarasvatī*, the earliest writer to comment on the whole original work (e.g., pp. 4, 400-402, 563-565, 680 of the N.S. edition) to dis-entangle themselves from uncomfortable situations have revealed this unhesitatingly. The formulations in the way of the other branch of yoga-cum-Vedānta ideology in manuals like the *Siva-Saṃgīta*, *Rāma-gīta* and the *Hatha-Yoga Pradīpikā* and in the later Upanisads like the *Annapurnopaniṣad*, the *Tejabindupaniṣad*, the *Mahāopaniṣad* and the *Mukṭikopaniṣad*—a mentality patent in the *Yogi-Yajñavalkya* form interesting reading and refreshing food for thought. The commentary of *Bhāskarakanṭha*, presumably incorporating traditional materials from Kashmir, on the entire work (composed in the last quarter of the 18th century) giving the *Saivāite* presentation of the

1. The fashionableness of the Y.V.R. among these coterres was noted and explained by the writer in his first paper on the subject 'The *Yogavaiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa*—its probable date and a place of inception' (Vide Proceedings of the All-India Oriental Conference pp. 544-554 Madras, 1924). The growth and elaboration of the Y.V.R. has been propounded in his latest paper 'The Emergence of an *Adhyātma-Sāstra*' (read in the World Congress of Orientalists, Paris, July, 1948 and published in the I.H.Q. Sept., 1948).

philosophical kernel of the work, was designed to check this unwholesome tendency of misrepresenting the views thereof. The main work as much as the *Samgraha*² has vehemently asserted its affiliation to the realised truths of a certain brand of well-established esoteric thinkers and *sadhakas*, who went by the name of *Siddhas* and have figured largely in religious and philosophical thought in India from about the close of the 9th century and had tried to include in their fold thinkers like *Bhartrhari* connected with the theory of *Vivartavada* and *Gaudapada*, as a fairly old and authentic list of the *siddhas* would indicate. Indeed many of the views propounded in the Y.V.R. are openly proclaimed as those coming from the *Siddhas* who have derived them from unimpeachable sources and realised them in their life-experience.

This point has got to be conceded and understood in the proper spirit and not in the lighter vein of the later neo-Vedantin in whose estimate the ground-work of *upalabdhi* (realisation) as undissociable from the *upa-labdhi* the realiser³ was all humbug and that all truth or verity centered round the self as the plank of monistic teachings. To the accredited *siddhas*, *upalabdhi* was as much *siddha* (an accomplished fact) as their own personality and therein was centered their main thesis or contention, which was much more than a mere *vedavada* or a *prajnavada*, to quote the phraseology of the *Bhagavad-Gita*. As in the *asparśa-Yoga* groundwork—itsself one of the cardinal their tenets of theirs—preached in the *karikas* of *Gaudapada* (III. 39) from which ordinary yogins are 'repelled and sacred away,' either because of

2. See Y. V. Samgraha, ch. xlv 2-3 16. — জনগণের (সিদ্ধ) প্রবর্তক
রহস্যময়ঃ। যিঃ স-বাস্তবিকঃ জ্ঞানবৈভবমোহনঃ। উভঃ সিদ্ধিমোহনঃ।
উভৈববভাবিতঃ। কাবীরবক্তৃত্বাৎকুর্ভাসামুদকরঃ। and

3. Ibid, xlv 34:—জিনবদ্যপ্রোবিত এন পূর্ণ জিতাবদ্যনবিনি হুপানঃ।
সংক্ৰমঃ কাশবদ্যনাকাকং বংগেভ্যঃ অপিতাভিতঃ।

the bookishness of knowledge-content or because of the resultant break from traditional uniformity, nothing short of an *ipse dixit* with the scholastic thinker, the *siddhas* harped on this matter in season and out of season and deemed it as an inevitable accessory in the attainment of the supreme knowledge through resort to great savants (*Mahapurusasamsraya*), in which faithful compliance (*siddhantasravana*) was as much a pre-requisite as in *Vedanta-sravana* on the part of those that dabbled in it e.g., in the *dakṛavidya* or the *madhukṛavidya* in Upanisadic texts. It was not merely the prerogative of the *adhikarin*—for *joana* was a precious treasure sealed up and concealed. (cf. the *Yogi-Yajñavalkya* I. 19, IV. 34; XII. 42). These *siddhas* had attained celebrity even during the days of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (as in X. 26, where the great *Jñānayogin* Kapila in conformity with the Vedic tradition as in the *Svetasvatara* was acclaimed as the foremost of such class). The interpretation (সিদ্ধান্তের ব্যাখ্যায় বিনা প্রযুক্ত বর্ণনায় বৈরাগ্যগোষ্ঠীর বিশেষ প্রাধান্য) in the Sankarite exposition of *Madhusudana Sarasvati*, in so far as it dealt on their zeal for participation in the eight supernatural faculties termed *siddhis*, touched them only in the very fringe—the idea of the *siddhas* as the semi-divine beings (অর্দ্ধদেবীকাক্ষণিকসিদ্ধিপ্রাপ্ত দেবগোষ্ঠী) with a peculiarly mythological substratum was certainly not their distinguishing characteristic. Their *nirvṛttitā*, turning themselves into accomplished selves might not have been so widely known and preached in the days of *Amarasinha*, the lexicographer, who seems to be unacquainted with this aspect of the word, as in the later days (say the 12th. century) when the Jaina master *Hemacandra* himself styled *siddhacarya* in contemporary parlance noted the divergent meanings thereof. (সিদ্ধা ব্যপেক্ষিত দেবগোষ্ঠী নিঃসঙ্গকৃত্যোঃ। নিত্যোঃ প্রসিদ্ধে with the preferential bias of prior mention for great savants like *Vyasa* or *Kapila*, in whose case the word

had acquired a *rudhi* as, in the case of the *bālāsk* teacher Candramitra with his *বৌদ্ধ* *বুদ্ধি* (Buddhistic inclinations) [described in the *Kaophinabhyudaya* (XX. 43) of Sivasvamin of Kashmir] who rose to eminence by virtue of his learning, character and honesty of purpose. A reference to their supernatural attainments in the line of the *Jataka* stories comes rather unexpectedly in the latter half of the *Nirvanaprakarana* (VI. 161, 38). Their noted counterpart amongst the *aryasiddhas* as in the *Bhagavalapurana* (III 24. 19) tells almost the same tale.

The *siddhacaryas* familiar to the students of provincial literatures like the *Baddha Gana Doha* who might have flourished near about this period with a distinctive bias towards heterodox thoughts and practices, were potent personalities to reckon with in the matter of their *desana* or *desita*, (their chronicled teachings) a favourite term with the Y.V.R. Jayanta Bhatta, the author of the *Nayamanjari*, in the apt spirit of the seeker after truth, is not slow to recognise (in the 4th. *ahnika*) the authority of the Saiva *agamas*, though he does not commit himself anyway to acceptance of views assumed by the Pratyabhijnavadins, the other camp of the Saiva school of Kashmir and makes a bold and determined stand against any new-fangled *vada* or-ism, which he ridicules as *বৈকিঞ্চিৎ প্রমাণ* (of questionable authoritative validity). The great Saiva philosopher Abhinava-Gupta in his authoritative treatises (e.g., the *Tantraloka* Chap. XXXV. and the *Tantrasara*) dwells on the importance of the Saivagamas, which comprised over and above an imposing list of mythological and legendary teachers, a mention of historical *siddhas*, just in the manner of the Y.V.R. and refers to their sublime self-imposed mission of conservation, elaboration and propagation of age-old truths in the light of new factors of experience.

স্বাস্থ্য লক্ষণস্বৰূপ সিদ্ধাস্তোক্তাহি হি লবণ্যঃ ।.....ভেদো

যোগিনোত্তরব্রাহ্মণঃ । তেষাং ক্রমেন তদগো ভট্টকালস্তেরাং বহা
ত্বা ইকর্কনাথকোকাং সিদ্ধা অবাসতব্ ।)

Abhinava claims spiritual descent from Utpaladeva, Kalhata and Somananda (the two latter of the 9th. century A.C.). Somananda in his *Sivadrsti* (Cap. 7) expresses justifiable pride in calling himself as the 19th *Siddha* in the accepted line of genealogy. The Y. V. R. indulges in minute details about the intellectual and spiritual strivings (II-8.21) brought to a head in Kashmir tradition amongst such aspirants and refers to their Saiva connection (e.g., IV. 32, specially V. 35, 36, 40, 41 46-47:— *বাক্তকৃত্তিপ্রসাদেন মার্গেশানুগামিনা* (agama, of coarse, is Saivagama) which Anandabodhendra in his characteristic manner takes to refer to Vaidika aupanisada marga; ন বিনাশো উদভ্যস পঙ্কতাং পরমাং পত্তি 1..... সত্যদ্বন্দ্বাদুপলক্ষ্যকর্কদুপ্রকালদয় । যে অকৃত্তে ন তে বাস্তি বোহ্যাত্ত পুনর্বপয় ।

Ugra refers to the fountain-head deity Siva, who is all throughout belanded in the highest terms possible.

নাত্তবঃ ক্রিষ্ণতাং কীৰ্ত্তা গুণৈর্বপন গামিতি: 1.....)

In a memorable passage (VI 9. 9, 10:— *দ্বন্দ্বং হুন্ম:*

সিদ্ধা: সঙ্ক দেবা হরাকর: 1.....অথয়ো হুন্ম: সিদ্ধা:—

on which the commentary *Samsaratara* remarks:—
বহুত্বটোরো বসিষ্টবিষামিত্রাক্ষয়ো স্বয়ং:.....মৌননিষ্ঠা: হুন্ম: ; but ominously keeps mum over the *siddhas* are extolled their superhuman efforts, no way short of the achievements of the *rsis* and *munis* of old. Still in another context (V. 54. 63-67, 83-86) we have a mention of their lending ungrudging help in the make-up of the *jivan-mukta* mentality in the *sadhaka*. (Anandabodhendra is at a loss to see why *siddhas* are particularly mentioned and notes on verse 67: *ভূরেভ্যস্তেষাং পুণ্যং ব্রহ্মণ:পোবদীর্ঘতায়ৈন* ; The indifference meted out to them by the academicians as much as by the un-informed public and the supreme self-contentment like that of the great Mahayana followers

are nicely described in VIa. 87. 31-33. Like the tree eaten *বরাবিবরকীটকং* but like into the unenviable insect in the regions underground *ভূপঙ্কঃ ইব জমঃ* (VIa 87-13) as distinct and apart from the case of those following a mistaken tradition *ভ্রংশব্রহ্মবিদ* but withal serene and tranquil, do they live their worthy lives and dedicate themselves to the mission nearest to their hearts.

(VIa. 87. 14:—*ইদামখতিভাঃ সয্যক ক্রিয়াঃ সম্পাদয়ন্তি হঃশাপকামি হঃশোমমুতং মে বিকঃ স্থিতম্*.) for we are told thereunder: *সাব্যাসংসদৃষ্টীনাং পরিগ্রহেন লেখরা। সতয়েন চ।*

বুদ্ধিসত্যতে দৃঢ়াভে যদা— (VIa. 87. 33) in the manner of an echo of the phrase in the *Bh. Gita*. The epithet *সংসদৃষ্টীনাং* as we shall presently note, refers pre-eminently to the *siddha teachers*. The comment of the late commentator on the first of these verses shown how perversely he misinterprets the views of the opposite school to suit his communal inclinations:—*কর্মসমুচিতস্থানং যে বিজ্ঞান্য-জনাঃস্থিবিব স্থিতম্*। The Saiva inclinations of the *siddhas* of his liking with their habitat in the sequestered Himalayan groves (V. 8, VIa. 2. 8, etc.) in the midst of which the promulgator of the *Sastra Vasishta* had to live to acquire intuition (*divyajnana*)—viz., the *pranavidya*, the secret of success in life (VIa. 16. 1/5) and their efforts for intellectual betterment, which go hand in hand with spiritual ennoblement, form entertaining literature in the pages of Y. V.⁴ The *siddha teacher Harihara*⁵ who was a

4. Cf. *বিশিষ্ট উবাচ* :—*সেহোদীশানকোপদে পদ্রাগমতে দিবি। অতি কমলকঃ শ্রীমান্..... (VI. a 14. 6.).....গৌরীকবরহৌষাৎ কোয়ায়ান্ বরবহিঃ। ককোপভবনিশেথৈববিজ্ঞানকোবিনান্।.....তালভাবল্যাকারীন্ বনসত্যং হাযব। কুতোষঃ জগতীয়াঃ দৃষ্টবাক্তজ পক্ষিঃ। (VI. 15. 18-22); [অতি...] কৈলাসে। নান শৈলেন্দ্রে গৌরীকবরহলিঙ্গম্। ভদ্রাত্তে জনবান্বেবো হৃদকল্পলবঃ। তং পুচ্ছন্নবহায়েব গুণিয়েবশিরৌ পূরা। কস্মাতিবনং সত্যভট্টে নিরতিভাবঃ।...সিদ্ধসংখ্যাতলিঙ্গং কুশলাস্ত্রাধ-সংগ্রহঃ। পূর্ণার্থং হৃদয়শুদ্ধিঃ পুচ্ছকং বনঃপ্রবীঃ।...কবারং শ্রুতকল্যাণে বিকীর্ণ*

Vedantic commentators. A Gita, as they pertinently point out, is a *smarta upanishad*. And here we have a symposium in which *siddhas* of different camps join and compare notes. The Y. V. R. while espousing a sympathy for the Spanda creed of Saiva brand is liberal and tolerant enough to acknowledge the traces of other philosophical thoughts and speculations bearing on the theme, though with their shades of colour and thought not always well-distinguished. The first verse in the doctrinal presentation refers to the fundamentals of the Spanda school and explains creation as *उद्देष्टुमनाद्योग* in the way of that line of thought and is an adoration of the great Siva, the *tattva* number one in the system, that is self-illuminating (*अक्षयः*) and ever cognisant of its stuff of bliss. (*अक्षयानन्दनिष्ठः*; should we not read *अक्षयानन्दचिन्मयः* ?) The *siddha* view of *dr̥ṣṭis̥ṭi*, which, whatever its debt to the earlier Vedantic creed, was not exactly identical therewith—the interpretations proposed by the series of *avahāras* (vide p. 653 N. S. edn.) in Anandabodhendras long but unconvincing exposition, should be read in their original Sanskrit garb by the inquisitive scholar. The *pandits* or the academic jugglers, whose attitude is denounced, (e.g., in the *Bhagavata Purana* II. 2. 3, 6) as distinguished from the *Kavis* and *Siddhas* who hold the key to such subtle problems, and the *bhaktas* (as in *Bhag. Pur.* III. 25-32) who regard *bhagavati bhakti* as superior to the *siddhis* of the sophisticated, are at a loss to fathom the mysteries which are crystal-clear to such esoteric thinkers. The rise of the first philosophical consciousness, (the *darsana-prathamabhāsa*) recorded in the upanishadic thought is view number two presented by the trite connecting link *अनाद्य ऊर्ग*; (others aver), which introduces eight other not always clear-cut views, the epithet *अनाद्य* third group of *siddhas* introduces the Madhyamika views, vincible exposition, should be read in their original professional Tantrikas, whether of the orthodox or the

heterodox stamp (অশিরক্ষ হকারাভ্যমশেবাকারসংস্থিতম্। অত-
লম্বকরত্বং বা তদাঙ্গানবুপাংমহে)। V. 8, 13) or, may be of
the *Sabdikas* or the grammarians, the sixth with a bias
noticeable in another context in the Y.V.R. (V. 43.
21-30) belittles the efforts of the followers of the
bhagavati bhakti just now referred to, the seventh
perhaps is a presentation of an older *Bhagavata* creed
allied to that of the *Bhagavad-gita* which leads to
nirasa or *asanga*, with this difference that they are
karmatyagin Sannyasins (কৌশীনবন্তঃ বস্তু ভাগ্যবন্তঃ), are
vairagins or *vairagis* in non-Sanskritic language. The
eighth view is that of the *Mayavadins* who, as in all
siddha literature, are not much thought of as they insist
on the unreality of the world. The ninth is a view of
the *yogins* which would fain repress all passions and
resort to *yoga* as the weapon thereof (যোগশক্তিবৃত্তিনিরোধঃ
in the line of the *Hiranyagarbha* section of presentation).
The last may be a reference to the followers of the
Sahajayana who as in the *Hathayogapradipika* think of
the knowable as the *kha-sama* (খ-সম) or *gagana-
sadrupa* and are later found to be eulogised by Gorak-
sanatha and the religious reformer Kabir. The statement
প্রশান্তমনসঃ যকে অরূপে ভবতি স্তুৰে স্থিতিকল্পয়া চিরায়। (V. 8, 18)
which reads like an echo of the cult of Sahajananda and
employs as its means *prasama* or *samadhi* has been thus
delineated elsewhere: যত্র সহজসমাধিক্রমেণ যনসা মনঃ
সমালোক্যতে স যোকঃ and has been fashionable enough view
(*drsti*) to capture the imagination of an influential section

6. Cf. ভদ্রাং সহস্রসিদ্ধসং!.....সমাদভঃ। চিত্তঃ সমাকল্পশব্দপীড়ি—
সমানভঃ সৰ্বধৰ্মাণ্যবেকাতারভঃ। বস্তুত্ব—‘বস্তুত্ববাক্যভূতমিতি যোগিচিৎক
ল্যাকল্পপীড়ি (৪)। (p. 35 in the tact *Caturmudra*) বস্তু বস্তু ভবেৎ
বৃত্তিঃ স। তথা সূত্রায়ং স্থিত। বৈকট্যৈকভাবেনো বস্তু ভবৎ ২২সেনাকলম্।
(p. 61 in *Maharukhopakasa* in the *Advayajrasamgraha* G. O.
S. ed. 1927). Cf. also his teachings of the *Caryapada* in the
Buddha Gita & *Doha*.

of thinkers. The view of the siddhantin leans as much on knowledge (*vyutpatti*) and spiritual striving (*sādhana*) as on the theory of grace, (in the form of *হরেশ্বরপ্রদ* or *লক্ষ্মীপতি*, in the wake of and as a sequel to *paṇḍita prayatna*), allowed a role of honour in Saiva philosophy (compare VIa. 127. 4, where the lecturical term *লক্ষ্মীপতি* occurs), and VIa. 127. 38, 58; and V. 7. 4:—

দ্বিতীয়তঃ স্বনৈবাৎ কিকিৎসাব্যপন্নচেতসঃ ।

ভবত জ্ঞানসংপ্রাপ্তিপ্রকাশকলপাভবৎ ॥

and as also this is introduced as the background of the Janakopaklyana—thus giving the whole account a new orientation). In this symposium the refreshing feature all-through is the absence of ridicule or cavil and the spirit of tolerance and sweet reasonableness.

Turning to the setting of the work as reflected in the manner, and from the informal method of presentation as much as from the standpoint of the inner essence of, the cultural outlook, the casual reader even can not but be impressed by the following outstanding features of the creed that is presented there. It is heartening to find that the views do not appear to be outmoded and effete but pre-eminently novel and modern, divested of the trammels of *colere* and convention and therefore less intrusive and less obsolescent.

- I. The *siddhas*, as it appears from what is represented of them in the vernacular literatures of India from about the 13th. century onwards, if not earlier, are teachers benign, accommodating and catholic in their views. The Y.V.R. can not conceal its disgust for the established canons of the fashionable philosophical systems, which are framed in a domineering and crushing pattern meant primarily for self-glorifica-

tion (*nigisa* and *atma-pratistha*). We read for example in III. 96. 68-69:—

দর্শনেই তে যে প্রোক্তা ভেলা মনসি তর্কতঃ ।

কচিৎ কচিৎবাদকরৈরপবাদকরৈঃ কিল ॥

তে হি রাস ন বদান্তে বিশিষান্তে ন চ কচিৎ ।

সৰ্বা হিশক্তয়ো দেবে বিদ্যন্তে সৰ্বগা যতঃ ॥

The commentator, however, explains:—অপবাদাঃ কৃত্বর্থাঃ ।

...তেষাং কৃতকৌতুহলে কারণান্যাহ—...তে চৈতি তবচ্চাস্ত্রানং
সাম্প্রদায়িক-জ্ঞানমুদ্যাহ—...স্বাভাবিকত্বতর্কশক্ত্যুক্ত—...ততঃ কবদ্যাদিত্যর্থঃ ।

What the *siddha* view points to about *sampradaya* is reflected in the adage সম্বৎসরবিদ্যা গুরুবক্তৃগম্যা with no fetish or formality accruing to it. It was not the particular view (*veda*) but the outlook (*dristi*) that should matter in a *darsana* worth the name—a way of life, of interpreting, enjoying and understanding it. The goal was not the total cessation or annihilation of troubles (আত্মাত্মিকী ক্লেশনিবৃত্তি of the professionals) but the standard of the *jivanmukta* ever pure, undefiled, though unyielding and never forgetful of consideration for others. । সর্বত্রবিগতোদ্বৈতঃ সর্বার্থপরিপোষকঃ V. 18. 4;

সকলত্রবিবিক্রান্তঃ শাস্ত্রমানমলোচ্ছবঃ । V. 74. 33).

II. The *siddhas* and their followers of the middle ages like Kabir, Nanak and Dadu are eclectic in their doctrines and have assimilated whatever they could gather from different schools of thought that were before them. This is just the viewpoint of the Y.V.R. also (e.g., II. 18, 2-4:—

অপি শৌরবমাদেয়ং শাস্ত্রং চেহ্যক্তিবোধকম্ ।

অন্যার্থার্থমপি ভ্যাক্য্য ভাব্যং ন্যায়ৈকসেবিনা ॥

বুদ্ধিস্বত্বমুপাদেয়ং কলম্ বালকাবপি ।

অন্যত্রবিবিক্রান্তঃ শাস্ত্রং পদ্যবদনং ॥

(an echo of which 163.56^{ab} is VI's last verse

ভাত্ত কুপোহরমিতি ক্রবাণাঃ

করং কলাং কাপুরুষাঃ পিবন্তি ।

যোহমতা ভাত্ত কুপোহরমিতি কোলাং পিবন্ত্যপাঃ ।

ভাত্তা গাভাং পুরঃস্থং ভো নাশাত্তাভিরাগিম্ ॥)

Anandabodhendra's comments on two verses II. 18. 4 and VIb. 163.55 are appreciative of the *apauruṣeya* and modern nature of the work.

নম্র হৃদি পৌরুষত্বং পুংসেযং তত্কাষ্মকৃতং চিত্তম্ভব
কঃ পিৎং হবৎকান্ জ্যোত্যা মোদেয়ং গ্রহমিতি ১০০ জনাং
কাব্যবাদপূজ্যম্

The later redactor in a happy analogy refers to the reasoning function of the *siddha* mentality, like that of salt in food. VIb. 163. 54— লবণৈর্বাঞ্জনানীৰ ভাঙ্তি লাক্ষাভি-
রাগি তৈঃ ।)

The *akṣepa* of the commentator:—

নম্র হৃদি কপিলবর্ণাঙ্কজৈর্মিনীশ্রুতয়ো বৈদার্বজা অপি
কথমন্যৈবেব পুরুষাৰ্থে তদুপায়তৎক নিরুপিতবন্তঃ
ভবন্তুজান.বা নিরুপয়ন্তি তত্র ভবন্তুৈ কো
বিশেষভজাহ)

though meant as support to the Vedantic viewpoint, is, because of the provisos therein, highly significant. This feature, as we have noted before, is the criterion of the *siddha* mentality that is ever receptive and never wants to be hood-winked.

- III. The *siddha* teachers in their recorded sayings or writings—and be it noted that religious reformers, many of whom were unsophis-

ticated, untutored but none the less pure as the ray serene, belong to this class—have often depended on episodes (*akhyana*) and analogy (*upamāna*) for their mode of instruction; and the *Y.V.R.* is no exception to this (II. 18. 33). A dry presentation of dogma covers but a small part of the work more than fourfifths of the matter and about seven-eighths—in the *Samgraha*, is occupied by *akhyanas*. The third *prakarana* of the work is professedly *दृष्टान्ताधारिकाय* (of the essence of such things as analogies and episodes); so is the fourth which is described as *व्याख्यानधारिकाय* (i.e., expository through the presentation of relevant fables and stories). The table of contents of the two succeeding *prakaranas* in the original and the *Samgraha* thereof in 25 sections (19th.—43rd.) prove this to be a feature of theirs too. This *Siddha* method of presentation in which the *dristanta* device is a part and indivisible part of the *dristi* or vision is thus justified and vindicated:—

यद् कथाते हि हनयन्मर्यादपमानवृत्त्या। गिरा मधुर-
वृत्तपदार्थरा ८। आदुःखलज्जलज्ज परिजे विनारि
व्याप्येति तैलमिव वारिणि वार्थ शब्दा ६.....कृत्वा
धूमाविधुविज (not धूमाविधुविज as in the N.
S. edn.) विनिर्गन्ध। आदुःखं वाति हनय
अविनाशमेति...वाक्यं किंलाजमिव तन्मनि हनयानम् ॥
आख्यानकानि कुरि वानि कथापि वा वा वन्यं एवेव
वृत्तिः परिप्लवक वा ।

(perhaps this last verse is a later addition by an incompetent hand, as the close com-

mitted by the use of one *বানি* and the one correlatice *তৎ* in singular would betray)

.....দুঃস্তুপ্তিকথনেন তদেতি সাধো ঐকান্ত্যমাত্ত
ভুবনং সিদ্ধয়িত্বেনৈব ।

(III. 84. 45-47)

Anandabodhendra notes:—

নানাকথাভিকল্পেভ্যঃ মহতোঃ ভাবভাসিকথা আখ্যা-
নকানি । অস্বাভাব্য কথাঃ ।

- IV. The emphasis on the meditation of the deity is here, as in esoteric circles elsewhere, pronounced to be the essence of all worship (*upasana*). Saiva tradition in other camps including that of the orthodox *Vedanta* teachers like Sankara and his pupil Padmapadacarya (e.g., in his *Vijñānādikā*) while allowing a possible latitude to non-vedic deviations, insists on *dhyana* as the *sin qua non* on this point. The Y. V. R. remarks (VIa. 38. 6. পূজনেঃ ধ্যানমেবাস্তর্জনাৎপূজ্যস্ত পূজনম্ । VIa. 38. 23. 25).

ন দীপেন ন ধূপেন ন পুষ্পবিভবার্গণৈঃ ।

নাগদানাদিমানেন ন চন্দনবিলেপনৈঃ ।

এতেষু পরং ধ্যানং পূজ্যৈবেব পরা শ্রুত্যা ।...

(VI. 39. 3).

নিত্যমেব সর্বোপাসনামং ধ্যায়েৎ পূরং শিবম্ ।...

(some *sadhaka* denominations have a particular fancy' for this mode). এবেহিসৌ

7. Y. V. R. V. 34. 112-115. আত্মনেহুতনমো বহুবিশিষ্টচিত্তাভ্যাসে
সৌক্যসৌকর্যেণেবে চিত্তেণাবিশিষ্টোহুতনমো । পদ্যাত্তৌহি সৌক্যসৌ
বিত্তৌহি চিত্তাভ্যাসে । উক্তৌহি বিকল্পেভ্যো বৌহি সৌহি সৌহিত্যে ।
বহুং ভুজ্যবস্তুভ্যং বহুং ভুজ্যং শিবাত্মনে । সৌহি সৌহিত্যেণেব পদ্যাত্তৌহি
Just in the ecstatic effusion of a Vedic seer or of Archimedes
with his ejaculation 'ureka' which is reiterated in another
context (V. 36. 26. 77-79. বহো বহুবস্তুভ্যং শিবাত্মনোপশিষ্টো... বহু
সৌহিত্যসৌকর্যেণেব চিত্তেণাবিশিষ্টোহুতনমো... বহুবস্তুভ্যং শিবাত্মনে ৷

পরমো যোগ এষা সা পরমো ক্রিয়া । VI. 38, 36.

গচ্ছতিভূতশৈব জাগ্রতঃ স্বপ্নতোহপি চ ।

সৰ্বাচারগতা পূৰ্ণা নিত্যং ব্যাবাস্তিকা বিয়ম্ ॥

It is not sheer accident that the authorities cited in the *Tantranibandhas* (e.g., *Pranatosini*, (Vasumati edn. pp. 149-50) the latest one composed in Bengal is an apt instance, because it is all-embracing and includes the *Rudrayamala*, the *Nile* and the *Malini tantras*, which are Saiva in design, refer to the deity as ব্রহ্মতালসমিতি সকলশীতরশ্মিশ্রেষ্ঠ, গুপ্ত তরুণানিত্যসম্মান, a form of characterisation which is taken exception to by some *Tantra* writers like *Raghavabhatta* in his commentary on the *Saradatilaka*; and it is quite likely that these had their inception in Kashmir). The form of the ninefold *bhakti*, Vaisnavite in its formulation, depending on surrender (*arpana*) and supported by other accessories and nice tit-bits is denounced in a passage (V. 43, 20-22) which is perhaps the only serious invective found in the body of the work, betraying a partisan spirit.

- V. All *sadhana*—this is the case in the Mahayana teachings too—should be indulged in a spirit of self-sacrifice, be world-centered and altruistic. It is the best form of activity and cessation therefrom combined in one (IV. 46.26; V. 89.16; VIa. 115.20). The *jivanmukta* the ideal sought for, is ব্রহ্মকর্তা, ব্রহ্মভোক্তা, ব্রহ্মভ্যাসী, the consummation of all that is noble from the standpoint of effort, and its relishings, a model in self-sacrifice or renunciation; and his *sadhana* (striving)

is a series of works of public utility like the *vapikupaladagadi* which are nobody's private property. The expression *ভাত্ত কপ* (*papa's well*), commonly indulged in like the hypothetical *রাহো: শির:* (the head of the Rahu) is a contradiction in terms; so also the endeavour of the *sadhaka* can have no personal reference—he is like the cloud and the sun and the moon, a public servant. Siva's mild question to, Vasistha (VIa 29. 104-105). *বন্ধন প্রশমশালিনা: প্রাপ্তবিজ্ঞানস্তুর: পরে কচিৎ কল 'পক্ষাঃ'না: কা'বদেহেহিত:* পদে ॥

কচিৎপদে নিবিয়: কল্যাণমমুযততে । কচিৎ প্রাপ্য-মুপ্রাপ্ত: কচিচ্চাম্যজি ভীতয়: ॥ the latter with its Kalidasan tone) is an intelligent directive. The *siddha* maxim for all and sundry is:—
Strive, strive and strive for ever.

নায়াং বিজ্ঞানিকালো হি লোকানন্দকরো স্তব ॥

(VIa. 128.96).

- VI. The *vasana* residuum which in the Y. V. R. in the *siddha* terminology of the Saiva school has been granted a wider and more far-reaching import and which is entirely personal and one-pointed in origin (III. 96.24), is at the root of Samsara and has got to be annihilated through its being re-oriented to the proper channel. The verses *ভূতাপ ভূতাত্ম্যং মার্গীভ্যং বহুতী বাসনা-সরিৎ । পৌরুষে-ভূতং পথি ॥ প্রবক্তে ন যোজনীয়া* (Y.V.R. II. 9.30)

8. In the language of Saivadarśana *সংবিদ্যীনাং সৰ্বং বন্ধ ॥* *সংবিদ্যী-*

বদেব সৰ্ববেত্তব্যকালীয়া বৈচিন্দ্য

(*Tantraloka*, p. 152)

(Kashmir T. & S. S. no. 36). It is just in the manner of the Y. V. R. that in the case of *vasana* and *samsara* as in other cases, the various shades of interpretation, implication and repercussion thereof noted in the *Pravimamsa* and in the Buddhist systems in relation to the Saiva groundwork, the system followed *par excellence*, have not been touched upon.

তত্ত্ব পদ্ধতিবোধে নূন বিজ্ঞানবত্ত্বনা। ভূভোগ্যসৌ হ্রা
 ত্যামো। বাসনোষো নিয়াধিনা। (II. 9.42),
 which are off-quoted verses, have a direct-
 ness of aim which just hits at the crux of
 the problem. The *samvid* or the *citta*
 (V. 78. 27—31) (with its passing phases of
Samketa and *Cetana*, brought to a forefront,
 as in the Buddhistic and Saivādarsana view-
 points with the idea of *jñāna* and *svasam-*
vitti, the হাঙ্গী প্রতীতি of the latter (*vide*
Tantraloka p. 80) has to be roused up to a
 conscientious assertion over the forces of
 evil (*malas*) that tend to disruption of the
 moral order (VIa. 127. 17, 18, 23) সংবিৎ-
 স্বলনভেদালী রাগাধাশ্চ প্রকল্পিতা। in the con-
 text of the *niralamba samvid*, the mighty
 stream thereof, of the Buddhistic setting is
 ever-flowing and eternal against its Saiva
 background veiterated e.g., in V. 33 তত্ত্ব
 সত্ত্বরিভাভোগ্য পরমেশং জগৎগুরুম্। here as in the
Rama carita XXXI. 99-148, or in VIa. 127.
 58) দেবদ্বিজগুরুভাভবদুহা তহাম্। সদাগম-
 প্রসাপানং মহেশাদ্বিপ্রোচো ভবেৎ।) The theory
 of grace (*saktipāta*) so much espoused in the
 Saiva darsana is requisitioned to explain
 such manifestations or emergencies. This
 is the inspiration (*samavesa*) that will kill
 all germs of *vasana* through the favour
 of Mahesa and make the *samvid* shine in
 its pristine effulgence (cf. Y. V. R. VIa 128.
 60—63, 65) হে বসিষ্ঠ মহাত্মা...গুরুম্ সক্তি-
 পাতেন তৎকালমেব বসিষ্ঠম্।...শিষ্যপ্রভৈব যোক্ত
 কামক্ গুরুব্যাক্যত। সদায়বশকা চেৎ কক্ হৃদতি

পকবৎ । পদে পরিনতাত্মং হি কার্যাবিষ্টা যত্না যতঃ ॥
 with a timely interposition of *double entendre*
 as in kavyas). The commentator in his own
 way remarks:—মলয়ত্রয়ং শৈবশাস্ত্রত্রয়সিদ্ধমাহা
 কামকর্ষবাসনালক্ষণং বা কথং বুধ্যতি শিষ্য ইতি
 শেষঃ ।... অমৃতসংলব্ধিমাত্রং যুক্তেন প্রাপ্তবশতঃ
 পাতেন যয়। শিষ্যস্তত্র দ্বীকরণং যত্নং কুরুষ
 শিষ্যোদ্ধারসামর্থ্যলক্ষণং..... লক্ষিতমহত্যমিত্যর্থঃ)
 The *saktipata* theory may have as its source
 the upanishadic favour as in the oft-quoted
 passage :—যমৈবৈব কথং তেন লভ্যন্তেহ আত্মা
 বিবৃণুতে তত্ত্বং স্বাম্ ॥ Katha I. 2. 23) with
 an implication not handed down in monis-
 tic view. Abhinavagupta in the *Tantra-*
loka (VIII. 173) explains this procedure
 and says :—

ইৎ শ্রীশক্তিপাতোহয়ং নিরপেক্ষতয়োদিতঃ ॥

- VII. The *manolaya*, *cittanasa* (III. 112) or *nirva-*
sanibhava (IV. 34. 27) constantly harped
 on in the work as in the counsels of the later
siddhas centres round the question of the
 removal of the obstacles in the way of
 success in life and in the final count of
 salvation. This has been described as the
 background of the fructification of the
paurusa prayatna (human endeavour) which
 along with *yukti* (reason) and *sruti* (ancient
 authority) as unenviable second and third
 items in the list of sources of authority in
 the Saiva darsana helps the *sadhaka* in his
 acquiring of the mastery over super-
 sensuous matters. The soliloquy and self-
 accusation of Janaka (V. 9. 55—56, 60—63)
 bring into relief the pertinence of *sadhana*

and the help which the *siddhas* deal out to persevering and competent aspirants with the result that life therefor becomes a matter of zest and pride in the long run.

- VII. The attitude of *asanga*, *nirasata* which comes to the practised (*yukta*) *yogin* is a specific assigned for all. It is a positive, though, difficult remedy and can function only through an element of faith and devotion (*śraddhōpada* in the language of the Buddhist savants) or contemplation and discrimination (*pranidhana* coupled with *viveka* of the orthodox school). It is, however, not an inevitable offset in this stage of self-purification and self-knowledge presupposed in the case of the *jiva* for whom the Upanisad pleads :—ন লিপ্যতে লোকত্বশ্চেন বাক্য, or in the parlance of the later *smṛti* as enshrined in যথা সৰ্বগতং সৌন্দৰ্য্যাদাকাশং

নোপলিপ্যতে । সৰ্বত্রাবস্থিতো দেহে তথাহা নোপলিপ্যতে ।

(which is explained by the commentators :—

সৌন্দৰ্য্যং অসংখ্যভাবকঃ ।) as in the text of the *Bhagavad-Gītā* (XIII. 32). This is a well-nigh inaccessible stage; but the *siddhas* would ever cheer people up and try to lead them to that vale of blics and renunciation. The *siddha* teacher asserts in a phrase of self-complacent divination :—

ন তথা নৃশৰত্যাং সংলগ্না বরবর্দিনী । যথা নৃশৰতি

যাতুমিন্দুশীতা নিরাশতা । meant to emphasize

the part of *asanga* in the function of (V. 74.

40) the riddance of the *esavas* (or desires and

hankerings); ন হিমাত্মন হৃদ্যভো ন বভ্যভো।

ন চকনাৎ । ন চ চক্ৰবলঃ শৈত্যং নৈত্যাত্মং

বদ্যাম্যতে ।

(V. 74. 43) for he realises that জীবদুঃখা-
পরীরাগাধুনর্জয়কারিণী। যুক্তা হববিবাদভ্যার তদ্ব্য-
ভবতি বাসনা। ভায়সন্ধ্যাভিধাংবিদ্ধি যাবদেহং চ ভাবিনী॥

(V. 93. 85—86). Through the grace of God and the instructions of the *guru* this can come only if there is earnestness and sincere endeavour on the part of the aspirant (V. 29. 50-60). This again can only be acquired by a cool and balanced mind, the prerogative of a *siddha* temperament (V. 87. 20), not in the academic toil and turmoil of the scholastic forum. This is the *siddhanta* in the Saiva system of the *siddhanta* in this august assembly of scholars proclaimed by themselves as such as from a house-top meant for leading people to rightful appreciation of themselves, because of their acquiescence in an assimilation of everything that is conducive to the general welfare.

The *siddhas* like the bulk of social and religious reformers of the middle ages, claimed to be of such description (*susamacetas*), because of their training and temperament (cf. *Siddharasa* in the language of the chemists) leading up to the consummation in the fitness and form thereof. Anandabodhendra's remark on this verse :— সুসমচেতসাং জীবদুঃখানাং সর্বং নিরবশেষগুণম্... শূন্যবাহিতিকরুণকম্য সর্ববাহিতিকরুণসংহারকরোঃ পরিচ্ছেদাপরিচ্ছেদব্যাধৌ পরমাবহিতা... ইতি জ্ঞেয়নায়েতি বোধ্যম্।

hits at one important point and that is the exalting of their creed. That these *sarvavadisiddhas* (vide V. 87. 21—22. Y. R.) belong to the Saiva group is almost an accepted fact though in one particular and solitary instance, they are separately enumerated (শিবঃ শক্তিলাভায় শিবঃ শিবমতদ্বাদায় V. 87. 19)

and at the sametime সৰ্ব্ব হুসমচেতসাম্ V. 87. 20), the difference, if any, lying perhaps more in the nomenclature of the one great entity than in anything else. The above-all practical approach and feasible end are a sufficient indication of the popularity of this creed as in the case of the later Saiva movement in Orissa, Bengal, Maharastra, Gujrat, or in the Tamil land where the creed (Siddhanta) reached by the *siddhas* became the last word or the end of all views. The Y. V. *siddhas* in their poetical-cum-philosophical *magnum opus* sought to achieve what e.g., Jnananatha, the Maharastra saint of the 13th century did in his *Siddhanuvada*. While indebted to the heterodox sects and cults—for most, if not all, the views noted in the preceeding paragraph were conceived amongst the Buddhists,—they were *vaidikas* and had not a word to say against these latter like the general body of the religious reformers, though they pleaded as much for all humanity to stand on a level of common fraternity. What they left unachieved or did not care about was a synthesis of all views broached,—though that is perhaps a big desideratum.

PROF. SIVAPRASAD BHATTACHARYA.

KUNDALINI YOGA

Though Yoga is associated with the name of Patanjali, we get very meagre information about chakras or Kundalini in the Sutas of Patanjali. There is only a passing reference to Chakras etc.¹ And this is no doubt a full recognition of the occult basis of Kundalini or the great serpent-fire as the power which enables the Yogi to attain the highest state of Kaivalya or release. But one looks in vain in these sutras for a detailed description of this power and its function. For that, we have to go to the Upanishads, like Yoga-tattvopaniṣad, Yogachudamanyupaniṣad, Yoga-kundalyupaniṣad, Yogashikhopaniṣad or works on Hatha Yoga like Goraksha-samhita, Hatha-yoga Pradipika, Tantra-sara etc. There is reason to believe that Patanjali has deliberately given right emphasis on the inner psychological and philosophical approach of Dhyana, Dharana, Samadhi etc., and has kept the occult basis of all these in the background after giving due recognition to its existence.

Just as Patanjali has rightly emphasised the path of control, concentration etc., he has also indicated the supreme importance of devotion and surrenderance to God.² *It is not correct to think as some scholars are prone to maintain that in the scheme of Patanjali Yoga, any object of meditation is as good as any other.* Patanjali's special reference to God is very significant; and it clearly shows that he was not oblivious of the supreme place of Bhakti in Yoga. Modern seers have left no ambiguity on the need to select carefully

1. III-29. Patanjali Sutra.

2. *समाधिनिर्दिष्टसर्वविषयस्य* । 1. 45. Patanjali Sutra.

the object of concentration.¹ The ultimate object of the Yogi is the attainment of infinite divinity; and the awakening of Kundalini etc., merely describes what happens within the subtle body as the aspirant makes progress towards the ultimate objective.

With the infusion of the scientific spirit, which requires experimental and empirical verification of facts, there was a natural tendency among certain scholars to identify the *Chakras* (referred to in the works on Yoga) with the *nerve-plexuses* of modern physiology; and this interpretation had a semblance of justification because the *original works on Yoga themselves have indicated the location of different Chakras by referring to those parts of the gross body, which are nearest to their real place in the subtle body.* Such method was necessary in the original works since the works were intended for aspirants, who knew nothing of the subtle body from direct experience and who could therefore get ideas only by means of their anatomical knowledge of the gross body. This method is referred to in Vedānta schools as *Shakhachandra Nyaya* (i.e., showing the moon in the sky by pointing out a branch of the tree on which it is seated). But from the *structural* as well as *functional* description of *Kundalini* and the *Chakras* (which it pierces and activates) it can be conclusively established that *they are situated within the subtle body and not the*

1. कन्दोर्ध्वं कुण्डलीशक्तिः सुप्ता मोक्षाय योगिनम् ।

अन्धनाव च मूढानां कस्तां वेत्ति स योगविन् ॥

ध्यायेन् कुण्डलिनीं सूक्ष्मां मूढाचारनिवासिनीम् ।

तामिहोपसक्त्या सार्धं त्रिवलयान्विताम् ।

कोटिसौराभिनीमासां स्वयम्भूतिना वेत्तिनीम् ।

समुत्थान्य महादेवीं प्राणमन्त्रेण साधकः ।

(1) "The object of meditation has always to be carefully selected and must be spiritually important"—*Meher Baba. The Perfect Master* by C. B. Pandey P. 306.

gross body. Some of the modern theosophical investigations also point out to a similar conclusion.

The great power, which lies in coils in the *Muladhara Chakra* is compared to a serpent by most writers. Its function is two-fold: (i) bondage for the ignorant and (ii) release or emancipation for the Yogis. In order to secure emancipation for the Yogi the power has to be awakened: and it has to pierce through and activate six *Chakras* or centres of control, situated within the subtle body. As the aspirant attains full control of this basic power he crosses the seven planes of consciousness.¹ He also achieves many powers or *Siddhis*; but they chiefly constitute an obstacle in the realisation of the Truth rather than a help. The aspirant is advised² not to exhibit or use these occult powers.

Kundalini unites with the Highest and Infinite Truth when after being awakened it rises upwards and activates all the upper centres of control. This process is known as *Shaktichalanam* (i.e., moving the power).³ None of the achievements of awakened Kundalini are possible or desirable except after full moral and spiritual preparation. Patanjali's prescription of Dharana, Dhyana Samadhi etc., secures self-purification through concentration on the highest principles. But quick and positive results are attainable, if this is supplemented by the life of active love for the Master and detailed guidance by a living Master, who has attained the Truth.

1. मूलाधारं स्वाधिष्ठानं मणिपुरमनाहृतम् ।

विहृतं च उवाहो च कर्तव्यं निरात्मकम् ॥

2. धूम्रः सप्त तन्वास्तुर्ज्ञानस्योक्तः सप्तभिः ।

3. रत्नेदिन्या महासिद्ध्येनं रत्नेषु पुनिष्यत् ।

न दरादिस्वस्वार्थं कस्यचिदपि योगिरहम् ।

यथा शूलो क्वातलो यथा शक्तिरस्य वा ।

यथा कर्तव्यं कुरुष्व स्वस्वार्थस्य गुणकम् ॥

It is not merely because of the dangers of self-delusion or confusion which haunt the unchartered fields of inner planes but also because of the possibility of downfall through abuse of occult powers, which dawn prior to perfection, that there arises the need for a living Master. The Master both awakens¹ the Kundalini and guides it to its objective with safety and certainty. He is to be regarded as one with God, who is the objective for the Kundalini. The *tantra* requires that the Master should be the object of concentration and should be identified with the Truth experienced in *Sahasrara*.² So Master is indispensable for Yoga. This point has been emphasised also by modern Seers like Shri Meher Baba, Shri Aurobindo, Shri Raman Maharshi and others.

DR C D DESHMUKH.

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1. गुप्ता गुरुमार्गेण वरः प्राप्तिं कुर्वते ।
तदा सर्वानि वृक्षानि मिथ्यन्ते मन्त्रबोधिषु ॥
 2. स्वपूर्वाणि सर्वद्वारानि प्राप्तिनमः स्वयम् ।
शिवेनैव सर्वकृतीति ज्ञानेनैवगुहं विदम् ॥

MODERN TRENDS IN CHRISTIANITY

Institutions, whether social, religious or political, survive through a series of necessary changes and adjustments. Institutions are merely mechanisms to preserve and enhance the rich experiences of a powerful personality, or the corporate experience of races and nations. They are subject to the same laws of life and death as we observe in the biological world. Any institution that refuses to move with the moving trends in history, with the moving phases of human evolution or involution, becomes static, stagnant, and as such forfeits the very purpose for which such an institution arose. The institution in that way dies and with the institution die also those who are identifying themselves with that institution even as the crew and the passengers go down with a sinking ship. The laws governing the birth, growth its permanence or decay and death of institutions are universal. They can be clearly stated and any critic of history, any philosopher of history can verify them as exactly and accurately as a scientist verifies his truths in his laboratory or observatory.

Humanism and renaissance in Europe, which culminated in Protestant Reform, have already shaken that rock of unity, which the Catholic Church gave to Europe, that mighty Church which attempted at the impossible, the synthesising and blending of the Greek, the Jew and the Roman in one organic whole. After the Oriental schism, it was Protestantism that divided Europe into rival and often warring camps. Religion was not unfrequently used as a cloak to hide the real issues at stake, to vindicate the real interests, which were nationalistic,

economic and political. From the Middle Ages Europe inherited the idea that Church and State were but one; that Kingdom of Cesar and the kingdom of God were substantially one and the same. It is on this idea that Charles the Great dreamt of rebuilding the shattered Roman Empire on a Christian basis, which he called; "the Holy Roman Empire." It was during the Middle Ages that we see the mightiest catholic synthesis in doctrine, ecclesiastical hierarchy and discipline brought to perfection. In spite of the tendency among some historians to call that period as "the Dark Ages," I for one will continue to hold that the light of the Middle Ages was such that even the darkest corners of the "Dark Ages" were not left unilluminated. The forces of light were stronger than the forces of darkness; the children of the Light were more numerous and stronger than the children of Darkness in the Middle Ages. This truth becomes clearer when we view at the Middle Ages with the same glasses and microscope which we would have used if we had lived in those remote times. A historian misses the scenes and significance of life at a particular period when he takes facts and figures out of their concrete context and applies to them criteria of a different age. Herein lies the fallacy of those who would identify Middle Ages with the Dark Ages.

The passage from the medieval obscurantism to modern illuminism was not at all easy by any means. The pioneers of modern thought had to pass through many dense forests and hell fires before they could make their headway against stereotyped orthodoxy, soulless institutionalism and canonical legalism of the established authority, be that the authority of the State or of the Church. The blood of the martyrs will always continue to be the seed of the Church, the vital lymph of any institution or organisation which is determined to be a living force in the lives of men, a lighthouse for mankind

groping in pitch darkness. Modern trends in Europe begins with humanism, where an honest and sincere attempt was made to discover the profoundly psychological human truths. The very term "humanism," was deliberately used to contradistinguish it from the "divinism" of the Church, even as "naturalism" is significantly used to distinguish it from supernaturalism. The study of the Latin and Greek classics gave a new impetus to a freer use of the light of reason, more freedom to the rights of individual conscience, and a sort of democratic freedom for individuals and nations to develop themselves and their resources in the best way that helped them. The movement was fraught with dangers; it did really cause that great religious earthquake in Europe, known as Protestant revolution, which was not a purely religious revolution in the strict sense of the term, but it was both religious, social, economic and political, the results of which, along with the French Revolution, continue to influence Europe to our own days. With Humanism, Renaissance and Protestantism, a new period opens in the history of European civilisation. The modern trends, whether in philosophy, religion or political science, have their roots in those movements. In a growingly inter-related world, the repercussions of those mighty movements cannot remain compartmental or continent-bound, but will have greater repercussions in other parts of the world as well.

While Luther, Henry VIII and Zwinglius were tackling the religious issues of the revolution, men like Copernicus, Kepler, Descartes, Bruno and others were revolutionising the basis of science and philosophy. Copernicus, a Polish astronomer, wrote a book entitled: "*De revolutionibus orbium celestium*," which, although completed in 1530, was not published until at about 1543, when the author was approaching his death. The book, revolutionary to its roots, was dedicated with filial devo-

tion to Pope Pius III, perhaps with a view to escape the anathema of the church for having destroyed the Mosaic cosmogony recorded in the Pentateuch of the Jewish Bible and the Aristotelian metaphysics. The real man who gave a philosophic basis to the Copernican heliocentric cosmogony was the great martyr-philosopher of modern thought, Fra. Giordano Bruno. His was monism pure and simple, monism in science and monism in philosophy, monism in religion. Through sheer dint of intellectual research and spiritual adventure Bruno reached at the basic conclusions of *advanta* Philosophy and monistic science. Bruno, many centuries ahead, anticipated the Monism of Haeckel and idealism of Hegel. Bruno was burnt alive at Campo dei Fiori, in Rome by the Inquisition flames. To this day a statue of the great Dominican martyr is seen erected at the place where he was burnt, at the *Campo dei fiori*, Rome.

Galileo Gallilei comes next in the list of adventurers in modern scientific research. The condemnation of Galileo by the Inquisition tribunal will stand as the classical example of ecclesiastical tyranny against the freedom of man, the defence of dead orthodoxy against the moving forces of creative evolution of human species. *Galileo* in his Dialogue between two representatives of the Tolomaic and Copernican theories, championed anew the Heliocentric view which made him a martyr of scientific truth against dead, stereotyped, organised ecclesiastical dogmatism. Those who condemned *Galileo* said: "The proposition that the sun is at the centre of a system of revolving bodies is absurd in itself, philosophically false and formally heretical, as it openly contradicts the scriptural teachings." According to the wise men of Rome, then, earth should be the centre of the universe and the suns and stars are just small lights created by God for man in seven days. Thus geocentric theory, the outdated Tolomaic theory, triumphed dogmatically and

killed the scientific heliocentrism, which was coming to the force.

The repercussions of the new astronomy, of the scientific cosmogony, were soon felt, in other branches of human knowledge as well. For the first time in the history of Christian civilisation in the West, nation-wide movements were started to emancipate scientific studies, philosophy and other branches of human knowledge from the dictatorship of ecclesiastical hierarchy, from the imposed supernaturalism of a creedal faith. The new methodology which the pioneers of modern science in the West adopted was inductive, as opposed to the aprioristic assumptions and logical deductions of the Church theologians and the uncritical, stereotyped and unprogressive defenders and apologists of the biblical cosmogony and the vested interests of a stagnant church. Among the leaders of this inductive thought the name of Francis Bacon is almost at the top. They paved way for inductive method to triumph and make the way a bit easier for the protagonists and leaders of modern science.

In the realm of philosophy the appearance of Descartes (1596-1650) was indeed revolutionary. All the fallible criteria of truth, sources of information, external senses, inner faculties, historical and critical evidence, were calmly set aside and Descartes, the greatest French philosopher and mathematician of his time, came to the rock of subjective "I am" consciousness, whence he built up a new and revolutionary system of philosophy. The Cartesian "*Cogito ergo sum*" or "I think, therefore I am," although new at that time, was however as old as the history of human thought. The centre of gravity in Hellenic idealism, in the Alexandrian school of Neo-Platonism, and later in the Patristic literature, in the philosophy of St. Augustine and Scotus Erigena, the same "*cogito, ergo sum*—I think, so, I am," is the basis on which their perennial philosophy was built. In the

East, particularly, in India, the peak of philosophic speculation, as it is in the *Advaita Vedanta*, is rooted in the philosophy of "I am" consciousness. The revolutionary consequence of such a position in philosophy, his mathematical genius applied to modern physics, created a new energy for adventurous thinkers and enterprising explorers of human life in all its aspects. Newton and Laplace are the two great names which were in direct spiritual descends from the mathematical and mechanical concept of the physical universe, as Locke, Hume and Kant where the spiritual children of the philosophic principles of Descartes.

While Locke and Hume laid the foundation of modern English pragmatism and rationalistic pragmatism, Kant influenced the transcendental idealism of the German thought on the one side and positivism on the other. While Locke and Hume annihilated the very basis of metaphysics and ontology by delimiting the sphere of human knowledge to empirical sensism, Kant paved the way for a new metaphysics, which was fully developed with Fichte, Schelling and Hegel. German idealistic philosophy, spread throughout Europe, particularly in Italy and France. It is the spread of modern German idealism that gave blood-transfusion to the fading religions of the stereotyped orthodox brand. While British positivist philosophy and the inductive method of Locke, Hume and Spencer pulled down the very basis of religious theology of the orthodox Churches, the metaphysics of the German thinkers, gave a new orientation, if not the total destruction, to the theological thought of the west, a new breath and breadth of life to the creative philosophy of the European continent.

Another significant factor that contributed to the modernistic crisis in Christianity and the consequent trends of thought in religion and philosophy of the west is the progress of historical criticism. The same strictly

scientific method which the leaders of new thought in the west adopted was applied with the same strictly scientific rigour to the historical studies and comparative study of religious and philosophical systems of the East and of the West. The Bible, hitherto considered as a book fallen from heaven, had also to come to the tribunal of higher criticism and had to stand the test of historical criticism. Along with the progress of scientific criticism, applied to religious and philosophical documents of Christian civilisation, the great western orientalisists brought forth a rich world of religious and philosophical literatures of the peoples of India, Egypt, China, Japan, from the Arab countries of the Middle East and from the icy cold regions of the Far and Farthest East. The progress of historical criticism together with the comparative study of religions, myths, scriptures and philosophies of both the East and the West, did undermine the old beliefs prevalent in Europe that Christianity was the Absolute Religion for all Mankind. Every absolutist idea fell flat at the resurgence of the strictly scientific and philosophic axiom of relativity of the entire universe, with men, things and events therein. A closer study of history of other peoples, specially of the big Asiatic continent, convinced the best representative thinkers of Europe that the same God or Truth is sought after and found by all peoples according to their special geographic racial, historical and psychological characteristics, that the Bibles, Korans and the Vedas are but different chapters in the universal revelation of Truth apprehended by human intelligence, that the scriptures are basically nothing but historic documents with myths, legends and fancies intertwined, that all religions of history are but relative approaches to the Universal Religion of Man. They found that religions are many, although religion itself is one; that all are many, although all are in reality nothing but one, that not pluralism, but monism, both material

and spiritual, is the honest, scientific truth; that religion of Humanity is one, although men are different by racial, historic and creedal factors.

The development of modern scientific psychology, psycho-analysis and psychiatry, brought religion also on the plane of deep human experience. In modern times, the stress thus has been laid more on the experience-side than on the belief-side of certain dogmas and creeds. The great discoveries of modern psychologists like Freud, Jung and Adler opened new vistas on the basic problems of life, on human problems based on sex-life and self-consciousness. As in modern physics, man, once considered to be the lord and crown of God's creation, dwindled into an infinitesimal entity, a mote afloat in the infinite expanse of timeless space, similarly in the world of modern psychology, our conscious plane dwindled into tiny islets afloat on the infinite ocean of the Subconscious. Poetic inspiration, prophetic glimpses, creative philosophy, artistic creations were all but manifestations of this vast Infinite Subconscious, expressed through the conscious medium of the little man, the *homo sapiens*. Modern biology reveals the gradual growth of life from the inanimate world and the evolutionary process of man from the monocellular primeval life-types. These are the forces that were at work when modern Christendom confronted the crisis of Modernism, less spectacular than the sixteenth century Protestant revolt, but more substantial in the gradual evolution of western world from within.

The sum total of all the modern trends of thought, affecting the orthodox outlook in philosophy, politics and religion in the West is technically known as Modernism. As there is something called Medievalism, in so far as a particular spirit affects that period of history technically known as the Middle Ages, so there is a spirit rampant in modern age which is known as Modernism. On the whole, Modernism is the voice of the future struggling to

be born in the teeth of opposition from inveterate orthodoxy on the one side and conservatism of vested interests on the other. As capitalism struggled to be born after the age of the old feudal system, so to-day socialistic economy is struggling to be born throughout the world, defeating the opposition of decrepit capitalism and its allied imperialism. Similarly in the realm of philosophic thought and religious quest, Modernism is struggling to oust its reluctant and dying rivals and come forth as a living force, as a ray of hope, gospel of salvation, to modern humanity. As there was only one Christian in the whole Christendom and he was crucified, so now the arms of ecclesiastical authority are raised against the Modernists to condemn them, excommunicate them, anathematize them. Now, of course, the inquisition fires are out of date; the other canonical and hierarchical powers of the churches are mobilised to cripple the forces of progress against reaction, of the power of freedom against the forces of stereotyped authority, of youthful, ever-creative forces of inner renovation and spiritual regeneration against the forces of vested interests and obscurantistic Medievalism.

Before proceeding further, we should make a distinction between that Modernism which cuts itself off from the tap roots and thus has but a glow of modernism, but in fact, has neither life, nor vitality from within. Such a Modernism is one among the many sects and parties and nothing more. Life is an organic growth, not an uprooted mechanism. Life is not a denial, but fulfilment of the past, the hope of the future. Youth is not a denial, but fulfilment of the early adolescence, as early adolescence is the fulfilment of childhood. It is this fulfilment ideal that is at the root of every creative thinker, original prophet and inspired poet. They seek for integration, synthesis, unification, though not always they succeed in their attempt. So, we distinguish between Modernism

that disintegrates, dissipates itself and cuts itself off from the tap-roots, and that Modernism that is the fulfilment and perfection, the integration and synthesis of all that has been accumulated in the past and acquired in modern age in various realms of human knowledge, historical data and human experience. It is this Modernism that is a living, creative, force in Europe, still struggling to be born anew, gain ground afresh, in a hostile, conservative and politically power-mad and economically-restless world.

The ecclesiastical authorities whether in the Catholic Church or in the various Protestant communions have taken stern steps to arrest the growth of Modernism, not only of that disintegrating, and life-denying type, but even that ever-fluid, creative and integrative force in the life of Europe to-day. The smaller the church, the narrower is the scope for freedom and creativity. Hence the so-called Free Churches, the Non-Conformists in England, the logical sequence of the scientific and economico-political developments in the West, are opposed to Modernism in any shape or form. But the great Modernistic movements within the Roman Church, the mother of all churches in the west, is of serious consequences and are of wider import. Pope Pius X issued his famous encyclical "*Pascendi dominici gregis*" in the year 1907 which was the official fulmination of anathema of modernism in any shape or form within the jurisdiction of the Church of Rome. The various propositions condemned in what is known as the "*Lamentabili sane exitu*," under the pontificate of the same Pope Pius X, is another atom bomb through which the Church intended to stifle and cripple the leaders of Modernistic thought in the West. Although the philosophy of religion and philosophy of history of the Modernistic leaders like Alfred Loisy in France, of George Tyrrell in England, of Boonaviti in Italy, lacked that allied synthesis of thought from both the East and the West, few can deny

the fact that did become the mouthpiece of the spirit of the people of modern age. In England, the influence of Dean Inge, Canon Lilley, Bertrand Russell, H. G. Wells and the two Huxlies, I mean Julian and Aldous, is becoming wider and deeper among the thoughtful section of the British people. Nay, the ideas of the advocates of modern thought, an integrating and integrative, an all-embracing and all-enfolding, spirit of the pioneers of modern thought, cannot remain circumscribed for long within their own premises. It goes to the four corners of the world, thus heralding the advent of the Universal Man, ever-in-making, and making the pathway a bit smoother for the synthetic work to be made between East and West, between man and man, creed and creed, race and race, nation and nation.

One of the mighty forces that contributed to that healthy, synthetic and integrative Modernism in the West was undoubtedly the revelations of a new heaven and a new earth made by the Sanskritic and allied studies. To-day in the West there is hardly any university of importance that has not instituted chairs for the study of Sanskrit language and the variety of philosophic and religious systems of the East. The most critical and scientific studies of the religions and philosophies of peoples and nations other than the white continents, have brought about a revolution, less noisy, but more significant than the French Revolution, which inaugurated a new era of democratic freedom and the emancipation of human minds and hearts from unregenerate authority on the one hand and blind, obscurantist, stereotyped forms of traditional religions on the other. On the whole, it was a definite step forward in the annals of human struggle for the emancipation of spirit in philosophy, religion, economics and politics. Such a brave step forward was so fraught with dangers and difficulties, as is every epoch-making event in history. The smile of

the spring daffodils comes after winter gloom; the dawn breaks out after the thick winter nights; a wonderful calm follows after the tempestuous ravings of the wild sea. So it is with the modern thought, the genesis of modern philosophy, its modernistic repercussion in religion, its application in the world, international politics and economic problems.

Both Capitalism on the one hand, and the Church opposed the advance of Modernism. In the politico-economic field, the old Capitalistic order with its allied imperialism opposed the march of socialist economy, either in its Communistic form or in its syndicalistic and corporative forms. The Church, however, opposed Modernism in philosophy and religion, because their old authoritarian basis was being undermined and new democratic forces, critical sense and scientific inquiry were up against the vested interests and social security of the Church. Creativity, spontaneity of growth in holiness, invincibility of spirit, are all born of dangerous living, the unending adventurous path along the sharpest razor-blade as the bridge of time and space, whence to fall is to be in the infernal abyss below, which to cross is the life-ordeal, life-mission, life-ideal.

Behind the scientific, critical, historic and rationalistic veils of modern Christianity, of the progressing vanguard of the Christian churches, the real vital force that sustains and justifies the whole movement is mysticism. The Modernists within Christianity have started embarking upon a journey along the path of the Real and Eternal, a life of transcending the limitations of time and space already under God's star-lit skies. Not one or two, but quite a few of Christian Modernists are among the most advanced mystics of modern age. They have realised, relished God in His Impersonal Absolute or *Advaitic* aspect. They have seen and talked with God. They drank deep from the ineffable bliss of the Infinite.

They realised that in the full awakened state of consciousness, the entire cosmos dissolves into nothing; for Brahman alone is real; the universe is unreal and man is identical with the Real, that *Brahma satyam, jagad mithya, jivo ceiviva na apara*, that "I and my Father are one," that God alone really is and the universe only seems to be, that God is Reality and world is appearance. But the darkness is no more when the lamp is lit; the world is no more when the Self is realised. The snake is no more there when the rope is realised. Fear, mortality, limitations, woes and miseries, all come to an end when the fetters of human hearts are torn asunder, when one has found refuge and relish in his inner Self, the Universal "I AM" consciousness. The cub that was grazing with the herd on the pasture land realises its leonine blood in it. The lion of divinity is awakenend within the heart of man and he regains his real nature. The bubble is burst and is made one with the ocean of the Infinite Life. The dewdrop of *jivatma* melts and falls into the shining sea of "I Am." The mustard seed is fallen on the ground, it dies there, it grows anew into the gigantic plant. The Son of Man is crucified only to grow into the glory of resurrection, into Infinite Life. Sex-born lust is defeated so that the Self-born victory may triumph. The mortal becomes Immortal, the finite reaches the harbour of the Infinite, the shadowy veil is removed to gaze into the naked beauty of the Eternal Substance in which this entire universe moves, lives and has its being.

Modernism in the Christian churches has broken down all the iron-walls of sectarianism, exclusivism, superiority-complex and re-labelling missionary zeal. It has got the most up-to-date version of the *philosophia perennis* or *Sanskata Dharma*, as its corner stone. It has broken with all forms of stagnant orthodoxy, not only Christian but also non-Christian. Modernism, like Theosophy, seeks a spiritual kinship and link between men and women

of various religious denominations, races and cultures of the world. Modernism aims at nothing less than a world federation based on the spiritual make-up of man. Men like Alfred Loisy and Earnest Renan inclined more and more to the critico-historical school of the Rationalists, whereas Modernists who have been influenced by the rising sun of the Orient inclined more and more to the spiritual and mystical school. They, like the Alexandrian Neo-Platonists or the Greek Gnostics and Gymnosophists, sought knowledge, illumination and freedom from within. These introvert spiritualists supplied the vital limph to the contribution of the positivists, pragmatists, rationalists and critics of the Modernistic school. The Modernistic mystics, the pneumatic gnostics, supplied what was vitally needed for the historical extroverts, to the somatic types. It is this balancing and blending of mystical experience with the scholarly and academic labours of the critics that gave Modernism in the Catholic Church and in the various Protestant denominations its strength, vitalism, dynamism and progressive march.

The vanguard in the Modernistic army are as much catholic in their outlook as the Vedantists of India, the Sufis of Persia, the Zen Buddhists of Japan and all those mystical experiences and esoteric schools of thought and life in the various religions of the world. Contribution of the Oriental thought to give the widest possible universalist ideal to the modernists is indeed great. Those few advanced Modernists, who seek unity of mankind on the basis of spiritual humanism, are apt to depict and realise the prophets of the world as the greatest humanists. So it is in fact. None were greater humanistic spiritualists, spiritual humanists, than the prophets like Buddha, Jesus and Muhammet. In this sense, Christian Modernists are hardly distinguishable from the spiritualists and modernists and mystics of the contemporary world. They are friends and admirers of the great prophet of our times;

Sri Ramakrishan Paramahansa. They join hands with all spiritual progressive forces, under all climes, under all skies. The Christian Modernists, while standing firm on the perennial philosophy or *Sanatana Dharma* of all religions, races and times, to-day gravitate more and more to Asia, with India as its heart, to learn more and more about the spiritual depths of religion and philosophy. In India, although the process of degeneration has gone far too deep, eating up the very vitals of the people, the precious pearls of spiritual religion and humanistic catholicity are still found. The old seeds are still there; what is needed is tilling the ground and cultivating the seeds of *philosophia perennis* and *sanatana dharma*. The harvest then will indeed be great, but only the labourers are few.

Man, whether he is labelled Christian, Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist or Parsee, cannot but bow before the spirit of Truth and Love made resplendent in the lives of the human beings. When the humans become the very embodiment of that Truth-Beauty-Bliss aspect of God, the very flesh and blood revelation of Sat-Chit-Ananda, of the Father-Son-Holy Ghost, they remain the torch-bearers in this benighted world, light-houses for us who journey along the vast ocean of *samsara*. The rafts of salvation are few, very few; but the dangers to get drowned in the ocean of worldiness—sex and money—are too many. Both the East and the West can still point out to a handful silent God-realised guides and lights, in this Atomic Age. The power of their Self-realisation is greater than the self-conceited glory of the atom bombers. India, second to no other country, in the realm of mystic experience, in the depth of philosophic thought, can still bear children of the heights of Sri Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore. The role of each thinker, mystic, saint, seer, seer or heroine, is unique. But all enrich the national

culture and indeed contribute thereby to the world market of cultures and world-awakening. In this galaxy of saintly mystics and mystical philosophers of India the name of Dr. Mahendra Sircar is indeed conspicuous. Eloquent in his silence, great in his humility, Dr. Mahendra Sircar stands out as one of the rare specimens in whom the wisdom of the ancient Upanishadic rishis, the *sanatana dharma* of Bharatvarsha, has found its expansive growth, illuminating exposition and intense realisation. At the first sight, the present writer who is now honoured to be requested to contribute an article to Dr. M. N. Sircar's sixty-fifth birthday commemoration volume, saw the irradiation and effulgence of spiritual realisation through the truth-transfigured eyes and face of Sri Mahendra Sircar. "Eye is the light of the body," says Jesus. When spiritual realisation is reached all the caste-class-label barriers fall, all shackles fall, and one reach the region of the Infinite. Dr. Mahendra Sircar to-day stands on the unshakable rock of Reality, the Infinite, and from there he continues to serve his country and humanity, more through his silence than through his deeds and words. May God's grace take us all to the yonder shore of Existence. Pilot of our souls, row us on!

ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM.

COURAGE

In Chapter IV of the *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle discusses what he calls 'moral' virtues (and vices), and among the moral virtues he puts down Courage as the foremost. By 'moral' virtue Aristotle means the 'exercise' or 'doing' or 'the disposition to do' rather than 'being.' Moral virtue is an *exercise* in relation to some objects, and Aristotle's purpose is to show 'to what sort of things they are exercised and in what way.' Courage is an "exercise" of this kind. It is, also, an "emotion"; as an "emotion" it is in a 'middle state' between the emotions of fear and confidence. Courage is, therefore, defined by Aristotle in relation to *fear*; the courageous man is one who is fearless in one sense; he does not show those emotions which ordinary people show in danger or difficulties or evil or calamities. In another sense, the courageous man is one who fears: "the right things for the right purpose in the right manner at the right time." The man who is not afraid of anything, 'neither the earthquake nor the ocean waves,' is a madman or a dullard. The courageous man fears *social* disgrace; to him *honour* is all in all. Aristotle is here considering in particular the "behaviour" of a *class* of people in the State, the class of citizen—soldiers or warriors. So we must ask: who is a warrior?

SUKINAH KSHTRIYAH PARTHA LABHANTHE YUDDHAM/DRASAM: "happy are the warriors to whom comes the chance of battle unsought." So, we ought to ask: who is a *happy* warrior; for wars have been many but few there are who are "happy warriors." The 'happy warrior' is not he who fights in *all* wars but in YUDDHAM/DRASAM: 'in this kind of war,' which is a DHARMYAM SANGRAMAM, a righteous war; and to him 'comes' the chance of battle. Therefore, the happy warrior is not either a 'revolutionary' who *starts* wars, or, an "adventurer" who *seeks* wars; nor, a "mercenary," fighting other's wars for spoils; and yet,

the happy warrior is "always prepared" and *delights* in "the chance of battle" when it *comes* to him.

Weapons he may have or may have none. Possessing no weapons does not make a warrior *less* of a warrior if he fights with his soul and, if his soul is "full of spirit" as Plato put it. Weapons do not *make* a man a warrior; for, having them may not lay them down for want of resolution and lament and curse himself: "O cursed spite that I was born to set it right?"

There is the story of great Arjuna, the hero of many a battle, to whom fighting was native to his soul and who was not a stranger to the sight of blood "flowing from broken heads like water from broken casks." He had no inferior weapons; nor was his battle other than a DHARMYAM SANGRAMAM; but his resolution to fight *was* 'sicklied over with the pale cast of thought,' at the thought for his relatives and, the consequences of the war in which he was fighting. And so his steel-like frame became weak and his mind confused and confounded, allowed his hand to loose its grip on his mighty bow. Of what avail are mere weapons if the will to resist is lost?

The 'will to resist,' therefore, can never be propped up by external factors like weapons or thoughts and fears about consequences. The 'happy warrior' can have *no* thoughts about consequences; at least, he ought not to have. He must learn to consider the pleasures and pains of battle, of victory and defeat, as alike, because, the happy warrior fights not for consequences or for consequences only; as Aristotle said, he fights "for the merits of the case and with dictates of principle." It is when he has shed thoughts and fears about consequences that, the happy warrior may be said to *arise* for battle at all; only then does he fight gladly and willingly: "considering pleasure and pain, victory and defeat, as alike and *arising* for battle only then: SUKHADUKHE SAMEKRTVA LABHALABHAU JAYAJAYAU TATO

YUDHAYAYUJYASVA: "Considering pleasure and Pain and success and failure as alike, arise for battle."

So, the happy warrior fights neither for empire nor for private gains nor even for honour, because, thoughts about these turn into "fears" and make him despondent and cowardly, and the coward "is afraid of everything" as Aristotle says. But the source of strength in the happy warrior lies in his being free from that subtle type of egoism which says: "that I was born to set it right," the egoism which causes him to look upon himself as the means of great things to come, carrying the burden of his duty and his mission with a vanity and pride. The happy warrior must learn to root out this vanity and this pride and perform all his actions, great or small, in a truly dedicated spirit. **MAYI SARVANI KARMANI SAMVYASYA ADHYATMA CHETASA NIRASIRNIRMAMO BHUTVA YUDDYASYA VIGATJVARAH:** "dedicating all actions to Me, and being neither despondent nor egoistic, arise and give battle *without the fever of battle*." Therefore, the quality called "courage," in the happy warrior, comes more from his *being* a type of spiritual nature than doing certain kinds of actions; courage is not merely an "emotion" or a "disposition" to do certain things in a certain way. The quality called courage arises when Fear and Passion and Egoism are shed: being without 'the fever of battle' in the midst of battle. There is a strength that is born when Fear and Passion and Egoism are shed; that strength is divine: **KAMARAGA VIVARJITHAM BALAM BALAVATHAMASMI.**

But the Happy warrior is a solitary figure; he is alone and he fights alone; his own life his only weapon, and its sacrifice in the cause of Truth is not too great a sacrifice for him; for, what is of consequence to him is that Truth should triumph and not mere life in the service of untruth. So what is death to the Happy Warrior but a "condiment" **MRTYURYASYA UPASECHANAM?**

N. A. NIKAM.

THE RISE AND RADIATION OF "EASTERN LIGHTS"

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Nevertheless it is allowable to speak of "culture-zones" and their distinctive features. This is no mere

figure of speech but a norm of thought, in an analytic as well as in a synthetic reference. Accordingly, the 'Light of Asia' is a perfectly veridical expression—as much a judgment of fact as a judgment of value. With peculiar appropriateness was the designation used in relation to Gautama the Buddha or 'the Enlightened' and that movement of thought and culture initiated by him, which has since been historic. Parenthetically, we may take into consideration the hypothesis suggested by Weber in his "History of Philosophy" which runs to this effect: "When we compare the doctrines, aims and organization of the brotherhood (viz., the one at Crotona in Magna Græcia about 520 B.C.) as portrayed by the Neo-Platonic historians, (especially Jamblichus) with Buddhistic monachism, we are almost tempted (with Alexander Polyhistor and Clement of Alexandria) to regard Pythagoras as the pupil of the *Brahmanas*, nay, to identify him with Buddha himself. Indeed, not only do the names (*Pythagoras* = 'an inspired one,' 'a sooth-sayer'; and *Buddha* = 'enlightened') bear such close resemblance to each other that even the most fastidious philologist can find no objection in translating *Pythagoreios* by "preacher of Buddhism," but the Pythagorean and Buddhistic teachings are very much alike. Dualism, pessimism, metempsychosis, celibacy, a common life according to rigorous rules, frequent self-examinations, meditations, devotions, prohibitions against bloody sacrifices and animal nourishment, kindness towards all men, truthfulness, fidelity, justice—all these elements are common to both. The fact that most ancient authors and above all Aristotle himself have comparatively little to say concerning the person and life of Pythagoras, would tend to confirm the hypothesis of the identity of Pythagoreanism and Buddhism." Though this hypothesis may to some appear to good to be true, yet to others it may, in all conscience, appear to good not

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Surveying ethical ideals in an international setting Will Durant, the famous American thinker of our times, says that there have been hitherto three conceptions of the ideal character and the moral life: "One is that of Buddha and Jesus, which stresses the feminine virtues, considers all men to be equally precious, resists evil only by returning good, identifies virtue with love, and inclines in politics to unlimited democracy. Another is the ethic of Machiavelli and Nietzsche, which stresses the masculine virtues, accepts the inequality of men, relishes the risk of

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BUDDHIST PHILOSOPHY

Buddhist philosophy owes its origin to the wise utterances of Lord Buddha and a group of exponents and thinkers who followed him. The celebrated Buddhist commentator Buddhaghosa gave it a perfect and final shape through his own comments and interpretations. The religion of Sakyasimha is virtually a creed as interpreted by him. The notes and explanations that are found in the sacred texts, literary and philosophical, are due to him and his school. It is not improbable that he based his conclusions on the opinions of past generations of exponents whose thoughts were embodied in the earlier *Atthakathas* (commentaries) which he consulted. It must be admitted that many Buddhist philosophical notions and concepts would remain unintelligible to us but for his explanations and interpretative comments. With the help of the writings of other Buddhist scholars such as Asvaghosa, Vasubandhu and Nagarjuna, it has also become possible for us to make philosophical matters clear and to explain all that seems to be abstract and vague.

In order to arrive at a correct view of Buddhist philosophy, first of all we have to understand thoroughly *sila*, *samadhi* and *panna*. All the authorities on Buddhism assign a very high place to *sila*, which is a foundation of all good qualities. *Sila* means habit or good conduct. Conduct or external behaviour is only an outward expression of the moral states (*Cetasikadhamma*) which constitute man's internal character. The moral character must grow, if it is to grow at all, of itself from within. The three factors in the Buddhist path, namely *Silavi-*

suddhi or purity of conduct, *Cittavisuddhi* or purity of mind and *Jñāvisuddhi* or purity of knowledge are of no avail unless they lead to *Vimutti* or emancipation. Conduct admits of two broad divisions as positive and negative. The idea of positive virtue (*Carittasīla*) as opposed to negative morality (*Varittasīla*) is found in the *Atthasālinī*, which is the commentary on the *Dhammasaṅgani*, written by Buddhaghosa. There are fourteen types of conduct. For all practical purposes the six broad divisions of conduct are generally recognised. In the refinement and sublimation of immoral conduct, in its eventual uplift to moral and spiritual level, lies the well-being of man, which is the essence of *Sīlavissuddhi*. *Sīla* is thought of as being threefold according to the varying degree of its efficiency as (1) *Hīna* or inferior, (2) *Majjhima* or mediocre and (3) *Panīta* or superior. It is described as that which pacifies the mind. Its function is to destroy evil deeds and secure the purity of body, mind and speech. The duties of performing and avoiding the dual or twofold aspect of *sīla* constitute the practical code of morality. Abstention from taking life, from false, abortive or idle speech, from theft and use of intoxicants are the prohibitive injunctions, while sexual purity forms a positive rule of conduct. The doctrine is that conduct (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*) and wisdom (*pañña*) are all essential. Concentration pervaded by conduct is fruitful. Wisdom pervaded by concentration is also fruitful. The self pervaded by wisdom is freed from the corruption of desire, false views, and ignorance. Concentration is attainable only through the observance of *sīla* or conduct.

If good behaviour or moral conduct is the outer expression of an interval state of mind, centred in self-control, this control is, according to Āśvaghoṣa, possible through *yoga*, which enables us to hold back the senses from their objects and to reach tranquillity through concentration. Good behaviour or moral conduct implies

moral discipline, which comes from habitual practice, habitual practice from keen desire for a thing and this from dependence on it. Moral conduct is the refuge, the guide as it were in the wilderness, the friend, the protector, wealth and strength.

Sarana is nothing but profession of faith which is implied in *Sila*. In popular usage, it means a shelter, a place where a man driven by fear, seeks shelter or protection. With the Buddhists *Saranas* or the Refuges are the Triad—the *Buddha*, *Dhamma* (Doctrine) and *Sangha* (the Order). *Saranagamana* is not a mere formal recital of one's faith in the Triad but an expression of self-devotion to an object and communion. The first Triad is the *Buddha* which is also called a *Tathagata* for the following reasons : (1) he has come in the same way, (2) he has gone in the same way, (3) he is endowed with the sign of *tatha*, (4) he is supremely enlightened in *tathadharma*, (5) he has seen *tatha*, (6) he preaches *tatha*, (7) he does *tatha* (truthfully), and (8) he overcomes all. *Dharma*, which is the second of the Triad, signifies the doctrine which is well expounded, which bears fruit in this very life, which is not conditioned by time, which has 'come and see' for its motto, which leads to the destination or desired end, and which is to be experienced by the wise individually. The word *Dhamma* has been used in Buddhist texts and commentaries in the following senses : (1) quality, property, characteristic (*guna*), (2) discourse, instruction (*desana*), (3) worded doctrine of Buddha, scriptures (*pariyatti*), and (4) mental states, conditions or phenomena without involving the notion of ego or entity (*nisattanijjva-dhamma*). Some guidance is given by Mrs. Rhys Davids and Stcherbatsky in the matter of understanding the Buddhist conception of *Dhamma*. According to Jaimini's *Purushasamasa* (I, 1, 2), *Dharma* is that which is characterised by an urge into an action fulfilling the

desired object. According to the consensus of opinion, the Brahmanical definition of *Dharma* is this. It is an end to be attained in conformity with injunctions in the Vedas. It is to be considered a distinctive quality of man to be achieved by means of action, work, conduct as enjoined in the Vedas. As to the Asokan use of the word, F. W. Thomas is right in pointing out that *Dharma* is based on revelation and custom and it is a sphere of conduct leading to heaven. In Varuna, the exponent of the Taittiriya system, the Vedic sages arrived at the conception of an ordered universe, where everything happens according to law, and nothing by the caprice of an arbitrary will. The relation between *Satya* and *Dharma* (cf. *Chandogya Upanisad*, VII. 2. 1), as two aspects of one and the same idea of reality, is emphatically brought out in the *Brihadaranyaka Upanisad* (I. 4. 14). Here we find that *Dharma* is *Satya*. *Dharma* stands for law, principle of justice, sphere of conduct in conformity with the established custom. If we say that *Dharma* is the *Ksatra* of the *Ksatra*, we mean that *Dharma* is the guiding principle of royal administration. The king in person is not above the law. It is the law that is above the king. The conception of *Dharma* was elaborated in early Buddhism. *Dharma* is that which is intuited or directly sensed or perceived. The *Dharmakaya* is, to Theravada and generally to Hinayana, the body of doctrine, the doctrine taught by the Buddha. The *Dharmakaya* is, to Mahayana, the *Dharmata*, the *Tathata*, the *Sunyata*, the *Paurana-dharmasthitata*, i.e., the element of reality in itself. This *Dharma* or *Dharmakaya* is the most essential point in all that is taught by the Buddha. According to the *Dhammasangani*, which is a Buddhist manual of psychological ethics, *Dharmas*, clasified as moral, immoral and indeterminate, constitute the mental basis of character which finds its expression in conduct or action. Now we can rightly say that *Dharma*

stands not only for the entire system of faith, thought or doctrine but for every part or argument or point of it. *Dharma* is so devised as to comprehend real, realised and reality, actual, actualised and actuality, phenomenon, phenomenal and phenomenality, matter, material, and materiality, mind, mental and mentality, cause, caused and causality, law, legal and legality, thought, thinking and thinkability, and the like; in short, the entire universe of reality and appearance, truth and opinion, thought and expression, principle and action, in and through which all things and all individuals may realise their being, feel their existence, rise into recognition, move into action or proceed to perfection.

As to the third of Triad, it is nothing but a corporate body which is characterized by the uniformity of creed and conduct. Internal cohesion (*samaggala*) constitutes the real life of a *Samgha*. The unity of action and commonness of goal characterize its external life. Thus the *Samgha* stands essentially as a symbol of unity.

It is undeniable that *Bhagavadgita* lays much stress on the need of faith (*sraddha*) for a devotee (IV. 39—40; VI. 47; VII. 21—22; XVII. 2—3). According to Asvaghosa, *Sraddha* is the first of the five *indriyas* and *balas* of Buddhism. The representation of *Sraddha* as the seat of higher life is thoroughly Buddhistic (cf. *Saundarananda-kavya*, XII. 39).

The four Noble Truths are regarded as the quintessence of Buddhism as propounded by the Master himself. They are as follows : (1) *dukkha* or suffering, (2) *dukkha-samudaya* or the origin of suffering, (3) *dukkha-nirodha* or the cessation of suffering, and (4) *dukkha-nirodha-gaminipatipada* or the path leading to the cessation of suffering. Birth, decay, death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, grief and despair are mentioned as common instances of suffering. Union with persons or things unliked by a person, or separation from persons

or things liked by a person is nothing but suffering from the mental point of view. In other words, suffering is a painful feeling which arises from disappointment. From the psychological point of view *dukkha* is *vedana* or feeling which is felt by the mind either in respect of the body or in respect of itself, and as a feeling it is conditioned by certain circumstances. In the absence of such circumstances there is no possibility of its occurrence. *Dukkha* is based on the misconstruction of the law of things (*dhammata*) or the way of happening in life. *Dukkha* is not postulated as a permanent feature of reality. It is entertained only as a possible contingency in life as it is generally believed. *Nirodha* representing the free and pure state of consciousness is posited as the ultimate nature of reality. The five aggregates of attachment constitute suffering, not the aggregates in themselves but only when they are taken hold of as one's own under the influence of craving. Sorrow also comes from the beloved. Sorrow also arises from affection, lust and desire. The origin of suffering lies in craving which is potent for rebirth accompanied by lust and self-indulgence seeking satisfaction everywhere in this world. A mortal has three kinds of craving: (1) craving for pleasures of the senses, (2) craving for becoming, and (3) craving for not becoming. The cessation of suffering consists in utter attenuation of that very craving. The craving in its varying forms and various aspects arises in connection with the senses and their respective objects. Where the senses, external and internal, do not come into relation with their objects, craving finds no outlet for self-expression.

The Noble Eightfold Path leads to the cessation of suffering. It consists in right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. The right view is

defined as knowledge in respect of the four Truths. The right resolve is a resolve to get rid of hatred and harming. The right speech consists in abstinence from lying, slandering, using harsh language and vain talks. The right action consists in abstinence from taking life, stealing, and immoral sexual indulgence. The right livelihood consists in following a proper means of existence. The right effort is an honest and earnest effort, made to check the rise of immoral states that have not yet arisen, to put a stop to the immoral states that have arisen, to produce the moral states that have not yet arisen, and to preserve and strengthen the moral states that have already arisen. The right mindfulness consists in the practice of fourfold prescribed mode of recollection. The right concentration consists in the successful practice of the prescribed mode of *Dhyana*. The four Truths as formulated in the *Dharmacakrapravartanasutra* represents a definite mode of procedure which was not peculiar to Buddhism. A similar procedure was equally followed in the *Samkhya* system of philosophy as well as in other branches of knowledge. In the Noble Eightfold Path lies the sure way to Nirvana or salvation. It is just another name for the Middle Path which discards the two extreme courses of life, one consisting in the practice of self-mortification, and the other in a free indulgence in sensual pleasures. Neither of them affords us the way to the highest wisdom nor do they bring us to true release. The first is violent and destructive of its own purpose by its extreme rigour. The second is like the way of a sick man who eats food not fit to eat. Of the eight factors that constitute, the Noble Eightfold Path, right speech, right action and right livelihood are to be practised in the sphere of conduct for the mastery of the actions (*sikṣaveyam karmapariśrāvaya*); right view, right resolve and right effort are to be practised in the sphere of knowledge for the

destruction of passions causing afflictions (*prajnasrayam klesapariksayaya*); and right mindfulness and right concentration are to be practised in the sphere of tranquillity for the control of mind (*samasrayam citta-parigrahaya*). Thus the Noble Eightfold Path involves on the whole the threefold practice of *sila*, *sama* (i.e., *samadhi*) and *prajna*. Broadly speaking, it is the development of five controlling faculties and powers, called *sraddha* (faith), *virya* (energy), *smriti* (mindfulness), *samadhi* (concentration). In *samadhi* all thoughts are simultaneously and rightly centred on a particular subject. Its characteristic is the absence of destruction, its immediate cause is firmness and its remote cause is happiness. As regards *prajna*, Mahayana Buddhism holds that the nature of *dharmā* is the perfection of wisdom. Being free from darkness of ignorance one should practise *parināpamisa*. The central idea behind all these is the practice of *Yoga* or meditation without which neither the highest happiness nor the highest knowledge is attainable.

Samadhi is raft concentration, and *jhana* (*dhyana*) is contemplation or ecstatic musing in Buddhism. *Jhana* was a very long standing practice similar to the *Yoga* of the Hindus. The four *jhanas* consist in the process of systematic elimination of factors in consciousness. The five *jhanas* are mentioned in the *Abhidhammakkhāṇḍikā* as equally holding good in the case of the *Lokuttara* state of consciousness. The four or five *jhanas* signify nothing else than four or five stages in a process of *jhana* from its inception to its termination in the attainment of a state of trance or *samāpatti*. Altogether five factors are involved in each process of *jhana* at its inception, namely, *vitakka*, *vicāra*, *pīṭi*, *sukha* and *ekaggatā*. *Vitakka* is nothing but an initial application as it directs its concomitant properties towards the object. *Vicāra* is sustained application because it

permits the continued exercise of the thought on the object. *Piṇ* is that factor in consciousness which creates an interest in the same object. *Sukha* is nothing but pleasurable, easeful and happy feeling, which results from the attainment of the condition sought for. *Ekaggata* is the element of individualization which develops from time to time into *samādhi*. It remains a common factor throughout the jhānic process. It is the most essential condition of the entire process of *Jhāna*. In the first stage of meditation, these five elements are present. In the second stage, the first two are eliminated. In the third, the first three are eliminated leaving *sukha* and *ekaggata*. In the fourth, *sukha* is replaced by *upekkhā*. Buddhaghosa describes right concentration (*sammāsamādhi*) as concentration on good thought. It is so-called because in *samādhi* all thoughts are simultaneously and rightly centred on a particular subject. Its characteristic is absence of destruction, its immediate cause is firmness, and its remote cause is happiness. *Samādhi* has been variously divided according to its predominant characteristics. Regarding the purity and impurity of *Samādhi* it may be pointed out that the condition which leads to its excellence, causes its purity, while that which causes deterioration, brings about its impurity. There are two ways of practising *Samādhi*: *lokiya* and *lokuttara*. The practice of *lokuttara samādhi* is the culture of wisdom, while that of *lokiya samādhi* consists in purifying one's own conduct. It really means concentrative meditation. It is of an intensive attention, i.e., of concentration, establishing of consciousness exclusively and voluntarily on a single object. Buddhaghosa takes *samādhi* almost in the same sense as *Jhāna* in contravention of the usual sense in which it is used. The states of *samādhi* are to be conceived as so many halting stations on the road. At each of the states there is no activity of thought-process

in *Jhana*. The nine *samapatti*s are attainable in three higher spheres of thought and three higher levels of consciousness. These spheres of thought and levels of consciousness constitute so many successive planes of direct experience. The further the mind travels away from the objects of sense the deeper is the concentration.

Jhana may also be taken as a passage of thought from object to object until a complete isolation from all bodily and mental objects is achieved. The state of trance is reached by the cessation of vocal functions, vital functions and mental functions. Buddhaghosa speaks of five *Jhanas*. With regard to *Jhanas*, five kinds of mastery are obtained : (1) Power of reflecting on the Jhanic thought, (2) Power of attainment, (3) Power of resolution, (4) Power of exertion, and (5) Power of concentration. The Buddha points out that there are four classes of people who practise *Jhana* : (1) one who practises meditation is skilled in concentration but is not skilled in the attainment thereof; (2) one who practises meditation is skilled in the attainment of concentration; (3) one who practises meditation is neither skilled in concentration nor skilled in the attainment thereof; and (4) one who practises meditation is skilled both in concentration and the fruits thereof. Of these four classes, the last one is the best. The Buddha advises the monks to practise mindfulness. It is by the fourfold mastery of mindfulness that one can go beyond sorrow and lamentation and obtain the right path. In this connection a pertinent question may be asked : What constitutes a grammar of *Jhana* ? The answer is : The subject of *Satipatthana* (right recollection). Wakefulness of mind, alertness, self-consciousness, mindfulness with regard to body, sensation, mind and phenomenon (*dhamma*) are all included in right recollection.

The five *khandas* or aggregates in Buddhism are

rupa (form), *vedana* (feeling) *sanna* (perception), *samkhara* (confections) and *vinnaṇa* (consciousness). Keith points out that this division of *khandha* into five aggregates has no precedent in Brahmanical text and it has no merit, logical or psychological. He has translated *samkhara* as the aggregate of disposition, and *vinnaṇa* as knowledge or intellect. It is better to take *vinnaṇa* in the sense of consciousness. *Vinnana-khandha* which is symbolically one unit of consciousness is a part of consciousness. *Rupa* denotes simply matter or material quality and covers the elements and their compounds.

Rupa (shape, form) is so-called because it reveals itself. Name and form denote the phenomenal being in its entirety. The form is matter. By form are understood the four primaries, e.g., the earth-element, the water-element, the fire-element, and the air-element. The aggregate of matter is form. Whatever form there is, all such may be explained in terms of the four primaries. Name and form depend on each other, and when one breaks up, so through relation does the other.

Vedana means sensation or feeling which is pleasurable or painful. There are three *Vedanas* :— (1) feeling that is pleasant, (2) feeling that is painful, and (3) feeling that is neither pleasant nor painful. Lust for pleasant feeling, repugnance for painful feeling, and ignorance of neutral feeling which is neither pleasant nor unpleasant, generally arise in the mind. Feeling is that which feels. It has experiencing as characteristic, enjoying as function, taste of the mental properties as manifestation and tranquillity as proximate cause. From the point of view of the mind *dukkha* is *vedana* or feeling, which is felt by the mind either in respect of the body or in respect of itself, and as a feeling it is conditioned by certain circumstances in the absence of which there is no possibility of its occurrence. According to

Buddhaghosa, *Vedana-khandha* means whatever has the characteristic of being felt. Though classified under three heads, all feelings are of the same nature on account of their being felt. *Phassa* (contact) produces *vedana* in eight different ways. It is followed by feeling and other psychical aggregates which come in succession. As contact is the cause of feeling, so feeling is the cause of desire. Feeling includes such emotions as joy and grief. It covers all kinds of feeling, physical and mental. It is either bodily or mental.

Sanna is one of the five *khandhas*, which appear side by side with the material form (*rupa*), feeling (*vedana*) and consciousness (*vinna*). Perception is one of the six organs and objects of sense. Mind or *citta* is stirred to action by perception of an external object. Perception is the mere noting of objects and it cannot reach the penetration into characteristics as impermanent, selfless and ill. According to some, perception has the characteristic of noting by an act of general inclusion and the function of assigning 'mark reasons' for this inclusive noting. Its manifestation is the inclining of the attention as in the case of blind man who imagines an elephant by the particular characteristic of the parts touched. Perception has briefness as manifestation, like lightning owing to its inability to penetrate into the object. In all cases of perception there must be an awareness of the mind. According to Mrs. Rhys Davids, *sanna* is not limited to sense-perception but includes perception of all kinds. The *sanna-khandha* consists of six kinds of perception. When an object is seen, there is the perception that it is of a particular colour; so also when any sound is heard, there is the perception that it is such a sound; when there is any smell, there is the perception that it is such a smell. Similarly, we may have perception of tongue, of body and of mind. *Sanna* in Buddhist psychology means the awareness of the marks, real or

imaginary, by which an object either of sense or thought may hereafter be recognized.

The synthesizing factor of mind is called *samkhāra*. Mind sets itself to a process of synthesis. It has an exclusive application to the psychical sphere. *Samkhāras* may be divided between those of the body, speech or thought. Expiration and inspiration are *samkhāras*. *Samkhāras* effect the form of rebirth after death. They appear side by side with the material form, feeling, perception and consciousness. They are the dispositions which lead to rebirth precisely similar to the *samskāras*, which in the *Sāṃkhya* system represent the predispositions of the individual resulting from the impressions left by former thoughts and deeds. In the chain of causation the *samkhāras* play the same role. Some have rendered *samkhāras* as complexes or mental coefficients. *Buddhaghosa* treats *samkhāra* as one of the five constituent elements. *Samkhāras* or collections of mind have the characteristic of composing, the function of combining and the manifestation of being busy. They are of three kinds: moral, immoral and indeterminate. The *Visuddhimagga* gives a detailed list of these states (Ch. XIV). Of the immoral type of *samkhāras*, there are 17 mental activities in the consciousness rooted in greed. Of the immoral consciousness rooted in hatred, there are 18 mental activities. Of the immoral consciousness arising from delusion, there are 13 mental activities associated with a state of perplexity. The resultant indeterminate mental activities are of two kinds: as conditioned and un-conditioned. Dr. Das Gupta is right in pointing out that *samkhāra* is a synthetic function which synthesizes the passive *rupa-sanna-samkhāra-vinnana* elements. *Samkhārahanda* and *Pratītyasamutpada* relate to mind. *Samkhāra* is synonymous with *Karma* and is mainly applied to *Cetana*. It also denotes the properties concomitant with *cetana*. Kera is justified in remarking that *samkhāras* are affections, temporary mental or moral dispositions, having their motive in volition or feeling.

Vinnana may be regarded as one of the *khandhas* or constituent elements. It is consciousness which runs or continues without break of identity. Although perception, consciousness or cognition and understanding are the same as regards knowing, perception is the mere noting of objects: it cannot reach penetration into characteristics as impermanent, selfless, etc. Consciousness knows objects and reaches the penetration into characteristics. *Vinnana* is practically wide enough to include both perception and feeling since it is credited with appreciation of feeling as well as perceptive power. Broadly speaking, consciousness is of six kinds as it is of eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind. According to Ledi Sediaw, *vinnana* or consciousness is the specific awareness of the material quality (*rupa*). Keith draws a distinction between the originating or receptacle intelligence and the individual intellectual experiences of the process. The receptacle intellect does not

denote any special concrete reality; it has no origination, duration or destruction.

Rebirth is to be conceived as *kammasantanti* or the continuity of an impulse. The point is illustrated by the instance of a set of lamps, each with fitness for ignition and placed in a row and in close touch with each other, one of which being lighted, the others are lighted. There is no passing of any spirit of one lamp to another. The lamp, which is first lighted, serves only to help in producing the necessary condition for ignition in the remaining lamps.

The problem of individuality is bound up with the problem of the ego, percipient or internal knower. There is an internal knower in every living self or individual, who is the real seer of all things seen, the hearer of all things heard and so on. It is no doubt true that whenever any mental operation takes place, it takes place as a unit with regard to time, depending on the same subjective basis and stimulated by the same object. A *puggalavādin's* position is not different from that of outsiders, who are avowedly the upholders of the doctrine of soul as a permanent entity. The elucidation of the Buddhist view of *Puggala* in the *Milinda* is nothing but an elaboration of the teaching of a *gāthā* ascribed to *Bhikkhuni Vajira* in the *Sāmyutta-Nikaya* (Vol. I). The aggregation of the five *khandhas* constitutes *Puggala*. The Buddhists hold that the individual has got no real existence; the individual is only a *sammuti*. The Buddha refused to answer the questions: Is *Jīva* the same as the body? Is it different from the body? The questions refer to the issue of the identity of the vital principle (*jīvitindriya*) and the body. But the arguments of the personalists are treated as applying to the person (*puggala*) and the five aggregates. As *Buddhaghosa* puts it, the chain of causation serves to negative the existence of any permanent self, the passive recipient of

pleasure and of pain; the process is possible without the idea of a self, even if it does not absolutely exclude such an underlying reality. A person is neither identical with the aggregates nor is he distinct from them; the relationship is described as ineffable, a position which forms a subject of attack by the Madhyamika school as well as by Vasubandhu (*Prasannapada* of Candrakirti on *Mula-madhyamaka-karikas*, ed Poussin, *Bibliotheca Indica*, p 283).

Dependent origination (*Patuccasamuppada*) may be claimed to be the fundamental principle of Buddhism as a system of thought. The term has been variously interpreted by scholars without sufficiently bringing out its philosophical import. They have tried to explain it either as a doctrine of causation or that of dependent origination. The formula of 12 *Nidanas* must be taken to be a later appendix to the earlier formulation of the doctrine. There are three successive stages in the formulation of the doctrine : (1) order of becoming, (2) order of cessation and (3) synthesis of the order of becoming and the order of cessation. The doctrine has been introduced in Buddhism as the way of the Golden Mean. It is by this way that the founder of the system is said to have established his position avoiding the two extremes of *atthi* and *natthi*, theism and atheism, eternalism and annihilationism, fatalism or determinism, and the theory of chance and of moral freedom.

What is the correct interpretation of the *Patuccasamuppada*? It is the natural basis of the doctrine of causation rather than the doctrine of causation itself. We have recourse to a law of causation in introducing a logical inter-connection between facts. The idea of sequence implies an antecedent and a consequence. Explained in the light of causation the antecedent is a combination of certain circumstances with causal efficiency to account for the occurrence of the consequent. Some Buddhist

schools speak of *paticcasamuppada* as *asamkhatadhatu* or uncreated elements. In the chain of causation, *avijja* is generally allowed to head the list. The term is generally rendered as ignorance, which does not bring out the philosophical connotation of the term. Can *avijja* as conceived in Buddhism be treated as an uncaused root principle like the *Mulaprakrti* of the *samkhya* philosophy? *Avijja* is not conceived on the lines of *Samkhya's* *Mulaprakrti*. The Buddha sought to account for the cosmic process of the cycle of births and deaths by mentioning two specific conditions of action. *Avijja* is that factor which keeps the nature of *dhammata* concealed, and *bhava-tanha* or desire for existence is that factor which constitutes an incessant impulse to becoming. All forms of of ignorance are expressions of *avijja*, and all kinds of desire are various manifestations of *bhava-tanha*. The Buddha speaks of the six senses. He points out that the eye and the objects of sight, the ear and the sounds, the nose and the smell, the tongue and the savors, the body and the things tangible, the mind and the mind state, are all impermanent and selfless. As regards contact (*phassa*), there is sensation due to sight, due to hearing, due to smelling, due to taste, due to bodily action and thought. Name and form originate from consciousness and from name originates ignorance. From sensation, desire, contact, attachment, and ignorance originate. Six senses originate from name and form, namely, eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind.

The doctrine of *Karma* is accepted in all the main systems of Indian philosophy as an article of faith. The doctrine was propounded before the advent of the Buddha by an Indian householder teacher. The Buddha is generally credited with the propounding of this doctrine. According to popular Hindu belief *Karma* is a sum-total of man's action in a previous birth determining his unalterable future destiny. Its effect remains until it is exhausted through suffering or enjoyment. In the *Bṛhadaranyaka Upanishad* and in the teachings of Yajñavalkya, we find a clear formulation of this doctrine. *Karma* is one's own, a man is an inheritor of his *karma*, one finds his birth according to his *karma*.

Karma is one's own refuge, *karma* divides beings into higher and lower. The Buddhist approached it from the purely mental point of view. A man need not be afraid of the vast accumulation of *karma* through a long cycle of births and rebirths. A person cannot be held morally or legally responsible for any action of his or her, if it is not intentional. The Buddhist teachers tried to define *karma* on a rational or practical basis. Buddhaghosa defines *karma* as volition expressed in action. An action is no action until the will is manifested in conduct. *Karma* is of four kinds: (1) *karma* producing result in this life, (2) *karma* producing result in the next life, (3) *karma* producing result from time to time, and (4) past *karma*. There is another classification of *karma*: (1) determining the character of rebirth, (2) sustaining, (3) oppressive, and (4) hurting. *Karma* produces consequence, retribution is born of action, action is the cause of rebirth, in this way the world continues. No action passes from the past life to the present nor from the present to the future. As regards the relationship between *karma* and its consequence, Buddhaghosa says that there is no *karma* in consequence, and no consequence in *karma*. A *karma* is void of its consequence which comes through *karma*. Consequence comes into existence on account of *karma*. According to the *Athasalini*, *karma* is of three kinds: *Kayakamma*, *Vasikamma* and *Manokamma*. *Karma* under the name of *Sankhara* (*Samskara*) is one of the names of *Paticcasamuppada* (dependent origination). *Karma* is ultimately reduced to the psychological factor of volition. Volition is the unique determination of will. Will exercise has its power over its co-existent mental properties and physical qualities. In fact, all our activities in deed, word or thought are due to its influence. The doctrine of *karma* is inseparably bound up with that of renewed existence. The world exists through *karma*, and people live through *karma*.

Asvaghosa was the propounder of the doctrine of *tathata* (suchness). *Tathata* is the highest truth in the domain of philosophy as the Tathagata is the highest being in the religious world. *Tathata* is the noumenon of the universe. The relation between the noumenon and phenomenon is such that one cannot be separated from the other. Asvaghosa refers to two aspects in the soul: *bhuta-tathata* (thatness) and *samsara* (the cycle of births and deaths). The soul as *bhuta-tathata* (thatness) is nothing but the oneness of the totality of all things (*dharmadhatu*). The *bhuta-tathata* is neither that which is existence nor that which is non-existence, nor that which is at once existence and non-existence, nor that

which is not at once existence and non-existence. It is neither that which is plurality, nor that which is at once unity and plurality, nor that which is not at once unity and plurality. This doctrine seems to be more akin to the view of an absolute unalterable reality as the ultimate truth than that of the nihilistic idealism of the *Ānkhavātara sūtra*.

Nagarjuna applied the term *śūnyatā* (emptiness) to express his conception of human life and truth. According to some it does not imply nothingness but simply expresses the ever changing state of the phenomenal world or absolute unrestrictedness of the noumenal side of the universe. In the doctrine of the void (*śūnyatā*) we find the idea of emptiness. The things that are void are imperishable; the void is immeasurable. In the state of *sannavedayitānirodha* a level of consciousness (*citta*) is reached where consciousness is ultimately thrown back on itself, completely void (*śūnya*), being devoid of the subject-object relation (*grāhya-grāhakabhavarāhita*) [Madhyantavibhāgasūtrabhāṣya of Sthiramati, Pt. I, p. 10]. Nagarjuna was the propounder of the theory of *śūnyatā*.

The reincarnation of the Supreme Being in a human form from age to age for the deliverance of the virtuous and the destruction of the wicked, i.e., for the foundation of the kingdom of righteousness, is a highly special Bhagavatic phase of the general Indian belief in rebirth through the transmigration of soul from one body to another. This belief came to exercise an abiding influence upon the whole of the religious thought in India since it found a permanent expression in the *Bhagavad-gītā* in the form of a philosophico-moral explanation of great changes in the social order of men. This Bhagavatic doctrine permeated also the realm of Buddhism from about the beginning of the Christian era, if not from a still earlier time and the development of the

doctrine or idea is mainly to be traced and visualised through two cognate types of Buddhist literature, namely, *Jataka* and the *Avadana* (Pali *Apadana*).

The *Jataka* doctrine of evolution of the *Bodhisattva* and the *Apadana* doctrine of evolution of the disciples may each be shown to have been based upon a special kind of yogic knowledge (*vidya*), either in the form of a series of full recollections of the past or in that of a cinematographic vision of what is happening at the present moment. This twofold knowledge is claimed to have been acquired by the Buddha and his advanced disciples—the Adepts.

It is claimed that by the first kind of knowledge an adept can recall to mind not one or two births, but many, even through many an æon of dissolution and evolution of the world system.

It is also maintained that by the second kind of knowledge an adept clearly sees how beings passing away from one form of existence take birth in another, and recognize the mean and the noble.

Though in their practical effect both the Bhagavatic idea of reincarnation and the Buddhist idea of the advent of Buddha are the same, it is the absence of the notion of God in Buddhism which makes all the difference between them.

Though the Buddhist philosopher has always repudiated the theory of soul, ego or personal entity, and will consciously refute belief in the transmigration of soul, the Buddhists as a sect could not get rid of the popular Indian notion of reincarnation of spirits.

For the Buddhist, rebirth does not imply the transmigration of soul from one form of existence to another; it is not based upon the idea of continuity of any personal entity or ego. When Svati, a *bhikkhu* among the immediate disciples of the Buddha, interpreted the Master's words by saying that *vijnana* or consciousness

alone outlives death and passes from one to another state of existence, he was called immediately into the Master's presence and taken to task for it. This is in fact the *Upanishadic* idea of the transmigration of soul. In the *Bṛihar-Araṇyaka Upanishad* the course of transmigration has been illustrated by the simile of a grass-leech (*grāṣa-lauka*) which passes from the end of one blade of grass to that of another, but this analogy has been found to be untenable in the *Bhelasamhitā*. The Buddhist point of view has been fully discussed in the Questions of King Milinda. When one individuality ceases to exist, another individuality comes into being. That ceasing to be, a third comes to be, and so on and so forth. In this way we have a series of similar phenomena, none of which being exactly the same.

Buddhism is in essence a proclamation of the truth of *nirvāṇa*, a clear statement of the truth about *nirvāṇa*, a search for *nirvāṇa* (*nibbanapariyesana*), and a tried path leading to *nirvāṇa* (*nibbanagaminiṭṭipada*). *Nirvāṇa* which is unborn, unrivalled, secure from attachment, undecaying, unailing, undying, unlamenting and unstained, is the condition which is deep, difficult to see, difficult to understand, tranquil, excellent, subtle and to be realized only by the wise. It is called uncompounded and absolute, infinite, real, unimpaired, not affected by any process of decay, immutable, invisible, not subject to ramification, safe, wonderful, unimpeded, sorrowless, difficult of perception, transcendental, unsurpassed, supreme, spotless, immeasurable, and free from attachment and possession. The wide popularity of *nirvāṇa* in Indian religious thought is undoubtedly due to the greatest importance attached to it by the Buddha and his followers. The term *nirvāṇa* occurs nowhere in any of the Vedic or Brahmanic texts that are assigned to pre-Buddhist dates. The belief already gained ground among the people of India at the time of the rise of

Buddhism that true salvation of man consists in evolving into an eternal personality exhausting all possibilities of rebirth. According to Nagarjuna these are two relative ideas and as such there can be difference but no absolute distinction between the two (*samsarasya ca nirvanasya nasti kinci visesata*). *Pratītyasamutpada* in its *samutpada* aspect is *samsara*, and the same in its *nirodha* aspect is *nirvana*. The vision of *nirvana* dawns upon consciousness, the realization of *nirvana* is possible in that stage of *samadhi* (trance or self concentration), which is aptly called *Sannavedayitanirodha*. The main ethical term to express the nature of Buddhist *nirvana* is *visuddhi* or purity. From the ethical point of view to realise *nirvana* is to attain the highest purity of one's own self, of one's own nature (*visuddhim attano*). *Nirvana* means the annihilation of passion, hatred and delusion. It is the waning out of all evils, the diminishing of the vicious, and the weak in the man, which is the negative aspect of his positive advance in becoming. In its negative aspect, it means the going out of greed, ill-will and dullness, and in its positive aspect, it means mental illumination conceived as light, insight, state of feeling happiness, cool, calm and content. The Buddhas declare *nirvana* as the highest condition. Without knowledge there is no meditation and without meditation there is no knowledge. He who has knowledge and meditation is near unto *nirvana*. *Nirvana* is the extinction of five *khandhas* (*pañcannam khandhanam nirodho*). The attributes of *nirvana* consist of absence of passion, destruction of pride, getting rid of thirst, freedom from attachment and destruction of all sensual pleasures. *Nirvana* brings about the cessation of all sufferings. It can be attained through meditation, wisdom, precepts, steadfastness, etc. A person obtains *nirvana* by making himself free from the wilderness of misdeeds. It is described as the state of bliss. It is also described as void

(*Nibbanasamkhataya sūnataya*). *Niroda*, *Nirmoksa*, *Nirvāṇa* and *Nirveda* are the different synonyms of nirvana. Nirvana is the salvation which is eternal, unassailable and noble. It is that supreme state in which there is neither birth nor decay nor disease nor death nor contact with what is disagreeable, neither disappointment nor separation from what is agreeable. It is that state which is tranquil, final and imperishable. Just as a lamp extinguishes for ever from the exhaustion of the oil and does not depart to the earth or any sky or any of the quarters, so the saint who has reached Nirvana does not come back to the earth. In his case the salvation means the exhaustion of corrupting factors. By extinguishing the blazing fire of passions with the water of steadfastness the saint comes to the highest happiness like a man descending into the cool in the hot weather. In the noble eightfold path as propounded by the Buddha lies the sure way to nirvana or salvation.

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A GENETIC STUDY OF RELIGION

Worship plays a prominent role in religion. Specially does it so in the religious life of the Hindus. Horizontally, it is an objective or universal ingredient covering religion in all its dimensions. Vertically, again, it constitutes the inmost personal core of the individual's religious life. In the context of the latter, religion is sustained by the living experiences of a person. As such, it appears to be subjective, personal or individualistic in character and defies all efforts of intellectual analysis. But, firstly, though *prima facie* a fact of the devotee's subjective or personal life, worship objectifies itself into certain patterns of practice which are characteristically universal. These objectifications of worship are almost the same always and everywhere. A comparative study of different religions of the world enables us to discover the more or less constant patterns of worship. For example, the attitude of worship has invariably been aroused by the conscious or unconscious motive to gratify some need as a result thereof, or, God has invariably been conceived either as the Father or the Mother or both. Each experience is personal or subjective, but conclusions deduced from a comparative study of individual experiences are universal in character. Thus worship is both individual and universal, or both personal and impersonal.

Some there are to whom any rational enquiry into religion or worship is repulsive, for it is deadening in effect, intending, as it does, to subject a vital function to analytical vivisection. It lays an axe at the root of a dynamic process which overbrims with the vivacity of life. It is, then, absolutely futile, if not positively pernicious.

But, as a matter of fact, such an enquiry is highly wholesome, for, it enables one to live through worship with a sympathetic identity, self-conscious and self-uplifting at the same time, not possible for one naive and unsophisticated.

Now, to start our enquiry. Why does man worship at all? Is worship an accident, a phenomenon merely casual, not causal? It may be answered that there is no such thing as an accident. To call a thing a mere accident is to confess one's own ignorance of the cause concerned. Worship, therefore, is not an accident but a phenomenon bound up by the inviolable laws of the human mind. It follows as an effect from its cause. But it is not, however, an external effect proceeding from an equally external cause. The cause, on the contrary, resides in several extremely inveterate and deep-seated desires of the human mind which issue forth into its effect, viz, worship, in strict accordance with the laws of psychology.

Materialism, however, would refuse to recognise in worship the operation of psychological laws and seek to substitute an explanation purely in terms of matter. Its latest innovation, viz, Marxism, again, would resolve it into some socio-economic forces independent of any mental process whatsoever. It must be admitted that the forces of social and political economy wield an undoubted influence upon human behaviour in general and worship in particular. Worship evolves along with the developmental stages of the socio-economic history of mankind. This parallelism is due to the fact that they are the two facets of expression manifested by the same individual or social human organism. But in spite of this confessed importance of socio-economic forces as contributing to the genesis and growth of a religious function like worship, it is inadmissible that these forces alone, exhaust all explanation. Social, economic and political phenomena have in themselves no ultimacy in their nature and, therefore, are far from being self-explanatory. They are not self-

caused, as supposed by Marxism. On the other hand, they are the psychological effect of interacting processes of the mind playing and played upon by the environment. To attempt an explanation of one of the most intimate and personal functions of man's life, like worship, at the sacrifice of the most deep-lying instincts of the mind, amounts to an absolute reversal of facts.

We are, therefore, to search for the cause of worship not outside but inside the human mind. The physical, natural or socio-economic forces contribute to the production of this effect only as extenuating or reinforcing factors affecting a process already determined by the cross-current of mental states. The dynamics of worship are associated with the innate and the most intimate nature of man. That nature consists in man's urge for an infinite expansion of his being in all its dimensions. This urge, again, is counteracted by his sense of utter impotence and sheer helplessness, the inevitable fate of man as man. Both internally and externally as well, he is hemmed in on all sides by limitations which set at naught all his aspirations for self-expansion.

Thus man is conscious of an urge for self-expansion and of being subject to certain limitations at the same time. But how are these two data of consciousness related in their order of priority and posteriority? Does the urge for wholeness or the sense of limitedness precede the other? Some psychologists decide in favour of the former, while others prefer the latter. Both, again, claim as their basis the same scientific method. The solution, however, seems to lie in awarding an equal share of simultaneity to each of the two. The urge for wholeness and the sense of limitedness must be derived from a common root, or they must be conceived as the concave and the convex sides of the same thing. Otherwise, science is left at this ultimate starting point involved in a circle. What that common root is, must be solved either by a direct appeal

to adult observation or left for philosophical solution. Introspection enables us to ascertain that the very urge for completeness arises from a sense of need or privation and the sense of need or privation itself is felt on the background of the urge for self-expansion. This opposition goes into the depths of our nature, so that any attempt at exalting the one at the cost of the other, as practised by the rank environmentalists and the nativists, is flying in the face of facts. Extremes are always dispensable, for, they cannot cover the cases that lie mid-way between them. Philosophy, however, would solve the quarrel of these two extremes regarding them as equally indispensable moments in the evolution of man's potential completeness towards its actual realisation.

Left to his own resources, man cannot overcome the numerous limitations imposed upon him by the brute facts of nature and mind. Life dawns upon him with a birth-cry. Whatever the reason of this mournful greeting of the world might be, all speculations are unanimous in regarding it as due to some feeling of resistance on the part of the child. Perhaps this is the child's first protest against his contact with recalcitrant nature and displacement from the mother's safe custody. Then begins an unending series of reverses. The child's uncompromising demands born of his unsophisticated wishes for food and love are conditioned and coerced at every step of his life. He is hungry and is not fed until he cries aloud. The mother's attention which is the prop of his life is available when the child's sufferings almost exceed the limits of his patience. His claims for parental love depend, for their satisfaction, upon the convenience of the parents. Finally, the overestimation of his own importance to the parents is dealt a deathblow when they receive with open arms a new arrival which is installed in his seat of love and affection from which he is dethroned.

The child's world was so long solely centred round

his parents. In this world of his fond fancy his father was the king and his mother the queen and he himself the royal prince with no rival or stand-between. The parents were in his eyes without any compeer, unequalled in Power, Love and Wisdom. But now that his fancied world has, abruptly, broken into pieces, that he has lost irreparably the citadel of his parents, what is he to do? He is led perforce to the battlefield of life, which he must confront if he is to survive. He becomes realistic and tries his level best to face reality. Being baffled in his attempts, he remembers with pain that past which is no more. He cannot forgive his treacherous parents whose betrayal is at the root of all his miseries. But the very next moment he also remembers with gratitude the love and affection of the self-same parents and melts in reverent self-surrender to them. He clings to their beloved memoir, respects it and offers the flowers of worship at the alter of their feet. He installs his parents on the secret throne of his heart, deifies them, invokes their aid with self-effacement and tears and atones for his previous act of insult by declaring, "Father is Heaven, Father Religion and Father the highest Penance," or "Mother and the Motherland are greater than Heaven itself" and the like. But curiously enough, this tender submissiveness on the part of the child does not last for a long time. It is quickly followed upon by a revolt against the real or the imagined cruelty of the parents. Immediately after this worship the parents' deceitful history flashes across the child's mind and his rage is aflame against his just-now-worshipped parents. So does he immerse or throw them away with the same grandeur and pomp as attended his act of worship.

The above alternation of love and hate centered round the same object, viz, the parents, is what Freud calls the Ambivalence of Emotions produced by the satisfaction of the Oedipus Complex. Ambivalence of

emotions is the alternation of mutually hostile feelings, like Love and Hatred, reverence and disrespect or worship and immersion, etc. It is a formation of which the nucleus is the father in the case of the son and the mother in the case of the daughter. Oedipus Complex is the unconscious alternation of hostile feelings directed towards the parent of the same sex. The phrase is borrowed from Sophocles' Drama, Oedipus, which culminated in the patricide of Oedipus' father and marriage with his own mother. This unconscious act on the part of Oedipus is generalized by Freud as the universal reaction of every child against the parent's affection and cruelty to him. The parent's love or affection needs no explanation. Their cruelty or injustice, supposed or actual, is that they did not allow themselves to be monopolised over by the child for an indefinite period of time nor did they afford him shelter as long as he desired.

But the ambivalence of emotions, characteristic of the son's oedipus and the daughter's electra complex guides and goads the child on to the worship of the parents as well. The parents are the child's first God. Which child has not garlanded or made obeisance to either of or both the parents with all the solemnity of the worshipful attitude? The present writer in his investigations into the religion of the child was satisfied about the validity of Freud's assumption that the God-man relationship is modelled upon the child-parent one. The parents call forth all the emotions and responses that are transformed, later on, under the operation of the laws of the unconscious mind into the constituents of religious consciousness. This fact alone accounts for God being addressed as "Our Father who is in the heaven," or "Thou art our Father and Mother also art Thou." The child's omnipotence of thought ascribes the attributes of power, love and wisdom to the parents overworked or worked out to their highest degree. In his estimation they possess all these attributes

in the superlative. But the child very soon is disillusioned and discovers at an enormous cost that the attributes of "Sapientia," "Potentia" and "Bonitas" do not actually belong to the parents. He finds that they are built of the same mortal clay as himself, that they are, after all, as helpless and impotent as he is. Gradually they somehow reconcile themselves to this inevitable disillusionment of their fancied infinity of the parents. The latent phase of the child's development is pre-occupied with the balancing of his shattered house. Then, with the onset of puberty, all the repressed contents of the unconscious stage come-back and the emotions formerly related to the parents are divorced from them to be directed to an exalted parent who is devoid of all the parental limitations and possessed of the parental attributes magnified to their n-th degree. So, whenever in distress, he no longer hugs to the fond image of the degraded parents but replaces it by that of an actually omniscient, omnipotent and all-kind God. His "Paradise Lost" is thus replaced by his "Paradise Regained." His much-longed-for Sapientia and Bonitas find rest in a finished product of his unconscious mind, viz, God. Such a resting house is an essential requirement of his life after all the comforts and security that he experienced in his parental shelter. Now, no more a child protected from the buffets of fortune and the storms of life by that parental stronghold, but confronted with the challenge of reality and involved in the life-and-death struggle for existence, he feels himself forlorn and desolate unless that yawning gap of the parents can be filled up by one who would never desert him. He must find out somebody who could occupy the vacant place. He longs for that lost stage of childhood which was passed care-free under the guardianship of the parents, but can no more seek their shelter not merely because they may be no longer in their mortal coil, but mainly because they themselves have been found

hopelessly helpless in saving their own selves from the characteristic human frailties. He has realised that they are as limited as he is himself, limited in power and wisdom. He must, therefore, discover God who is infinite in wisdom, unlimited in power and inexhaustible in love, who is the being of his being, his inalienable associate, never to leave him in life and not even after death.

God, as said above, is a father-surrogate and therefore, He revives all the emotions that the child felt in relation to the parents. The same duality, the same conflict or ambivalence of emotions are evoked in relation to God, as those centred round the child's attitude to his parents. The same hatred, again, alternating with love, marks his surrender to God. The devotee in relation to God is an exact prototype of the child in relation to the parents. The same unsophisticated dependence, the same omnipotence of thought over-estimating the attributes previously assigned to the parents and the same imprecations or importunate solicitations for favour characterise the attitude towards God. The devotee not merely idolizes, behymes, worships and prays to God, but also, just like in a child's behaviour to the parents, rebukes, abuses, challenges and becomes, even, violent to Him. Sometimes the devotee gives vent to his anger, jealousy or even hatred in relation to God. Sadhak Kamalakanta challenges the Divine Mother to a fight. He sings, "Come, oh Mother, to the battle of *sadhana*; I shall see who wins, the son, or the Mother." Here are involved love and hatred, submission and aggressiveness in the same attitude of the Bhakta to his Bhagavan. The *bhakta* addresses God by the fondest name of endearment and holds out the threat of challenge the very next moment. Bama Khyapa, a great *sadhaka*, is widely known to have behaved with the Divine Mother with submission alternating with defiance like Kamalakanta.

Ramprasad is credited with the same rhythmic oscillation of love and hatred. Besides, a contemporary sadhaka of our times, Satyadeva, so explicitly recognized the presence of aggressiveness in sadhana, that he named the school founded by him as "Sadhan Samar." The spirit behind this denomination of a spiritual institution meant for training the devotee in the realization of God, or established as "a vale for soul-making," is that sadhana is not a tame affair but a great adventure into the vast realm of the great Beyond. The phase of loving submission is copiously illustrated in the lives of all sadhakas or saints of all countries and times. Sri Gauranga, Sri Ramkrishna and Ramprasad, among others, are the very symbol of loving surrender and submission to God. Ramprasad voiced forth the eternal music of the Bhakta's soul when in utter surrender to the Mother, he sang, "All is Thy will, oh Mother, for, Thou art the Will incarnate; Thy acts Thou workest out through me though others say that I do these." Again does the sadhaka pour out his divine music, "Oh Mother, Thy instrument am I and upon it dost Thou play." The same dedicative spirit with its parallel instinct of assertion or aggression is characteristic of a St. Teresa, Madam Guyon, Ruysbroeck or a Richard Rolle. The above ambivalent attitude is decisively proved in the conclusive part of Hindu worship, viz, "Visarjjan," or what is grandiloquently called the immersion ceremony. The very God who is most solemnly worshipped through the varied processes of Acaman, Asan—Suddhi, Nyasa, Pranayam, Dhyana, Padya, Arghya, Sandal-flower-water-and-leaf-offerings, Dhup, Dip-Naivedya-gifts, Pranam and Arati, etc., is paradoxically abandoned and immersed or thrown into water with the same, if not more, solemnity and grandeur. This curious phenomenon has its analogue in the Totemistic worship of the totem animal followed by the sacrifice and subsequently by the partaking of the meat of that very animal itself. The two are simi-

lar but not identical. But the unconscious operation of ambivalence is undeniably obvious in both.

In reply to the query with which the discourse was opened, as to why do men worship at all, the analysis of the mechanism of Worship or Pujah, as made above along the lines laid down by Freud, is, in a nut-shell, as follows:—Man has been uprooted from the shelter of his parents according to the inexorable laws of nature and consequently cherishes love and harbours hatred at the same time with respect to the parents. The causative forces of worship or pujah are constituted by man's efforts to recapture the snatched-off or somehow-lost parental shelter. Not knowing this root of his religious attitude, man wanders about in darkness and laments aloud, "Ah Mother, Thou aggressor of the Asuras, exterminator of the enemy, protector of the unsheltered, resourceless and the pain-stricken, give me strength, prowess and wealth, etc." If instead of this man said, "Alas, my mother, alas my father, thrown off from your laps I am afflicted, defeated and humiliated at every step of my life, I am perforce involved in the struggle with stern reality, but, being weak in body and mind, I cannot rise equal to the powerful adversary. Oh, my parents, my misery knows no bounds, be kind and take me back to your loving laps," then the motivating factors underlying worship would be truly reflected.

Freud says with a note of complaint, "Is this the language of a full-grown adult who has attained to the mature status of manhood or the bewailing of an immature child? Is this how a grown-up and virile man speaks, or how a helpless infant sobs and sighs? Would man for ever remain a child, lamenting for the security of parental care, whenever in distress or vanquished in life? Should he not, on the contrary, fight out his enemy upto the last ditch, until the latter is defeated? Should he not, instead of acknowledging defeat, face the enemy with redoubled hope and reinvigorated energy? Would man never outgrow

the stage of childhood and attain to mature manhood?" Freud might go further and say, "Why should man, whenever distressed, surrender to the Goddess Durga, like Suratha, Samadhi or Sri Ramachandra, and not challenge the adversary in the open field of battle? Why should he rend the skies crying, "Oh mother, oh father," and like a coward retreat from the battle-field of life and not hold the foe at bay until he is brought to his knees? Should not man face every danger with the sabre of his knowledge unsheathed, subject it to a threadbare analysis, discover its reasons, trace it to its last roots, explore all the possible danger-zones and not merely fight out the presented aggressions but also be on his guard against any imminent or remotely future calamity? Should man be a prisoner enclosed within himself by his retirement in religion as the last resort, and not expand the horizon of his intellectual life more and ever more? Should he not illumine every dark nook and corner of his ignorance, which is his most mortal foe, by focussing upon it the torch-light of scientific knowledge in the triumphant march of life or seek some retreating corner of ignominy and defeat?"

Critical Appreciation:—

The above are some of the argumentative appeals made by Freud, from the standpoint of science, to man's instinct of unreasoned faith. These are doubtlessly of inestimable value. "Knowledge is Power" as Bacon said, or "Jnanat Saktih," as the Indian seer put it. Knowledge is the most potent weapon for interrogating nature and conquering fresh territories of the previously unknown. There is nothing more effective and powerful than knowledge in liberating the soul from bondage or promoting its highest good. Reason is one and universal, while faiths are endless, differing from place to place, as said Confucius. Reason unifies, while faith divides. This supremacy assigned by Freud to reason elicits our great respect for him. His appeal to man from the

common platform of reason must not fall on deaf ears, rather it is bound to register the unstinted support of any reasonable human being. But are Freud's analyses of religion and his subsequent reflections thrown upon it deserving of unanimous support? Is religion, after all, irrational out and out? Is it an illusion mistaken for a reality? Is it an infantile trait of the mind, wholly incompatible with normal manhood? Is it a regression to childhood, a retrograde step in the progressive march of life, a doting upon or revelling in the past with gross negligence of the present and the future? If religion and all functions of worship be the behaviour of the defeated coward, then, confessedly, it must of necessity, be banished from human life altogether, for power or prowess is never obtained by the beggarly solicitations of the poor or the child. "Veerabhogya Vasundhara," or the world is enjoyed by the brave alone. There is no concession for the weak. When would man stand up erect like a hero and declare, "Men we are. Our prestige and dignity lie not in abject submission but in self-assertion and freedom. Inherently strong we are and reliant upon our own selves by nature. We are soldiers in the battle of life and are determined to bring down reality to our submission. We must dissect and analyse it by the sword of knowledge and will no more tolerate this life of bondage and mean subjection."

But though this argumentative appeal on the part of Freud may be admissible as provocative of free thought in its general tenor of approach, it is positively doubtful as directed against religion or a necessary factor of religious life like worship or *pujah*. (i) Firstly, is religion really a mental reaction of the coward or the escapist, or, is it purely a negative mode of compensating for some repressed desires? Is not religion, on the other hand, a heroic trait of the mind, not merely a strategy for escape but a weapon of defence and offence as well? Again, is

religion an infantile mentality? Is it a regressive or retrogressive attitude and against any progressive outlook? (iii) Secondly, what does Freud mean by Religion, or in what sense does he use the term? Do not all his analyses and criticisms based upon them miss their mark by being directed against a straw-man or a pseudo-religion, and, therefore, fail to touch Religion at all? Does not the founder of Psycho-analysis rely solely, if not wholly, upon what emerges as religion in his neurotic and psychotic patients which is only superficially similar to religion but a far cry from what Religion is in the true sense of the term? (iii) Thirdly, is Freud justified in drawing a strict line of demarcation, as he does, between Science and Religion? Do they differ as he supposes them to do? What are the method and objective of Science and what are those of Religion? What, again, is the correct relation between the two on the background of their true methodology and subject-matter or aim? (iv) Fourthly, has science any special prerogative over religion, or is the former superior to, and therefore empowered to sit in judgment upon, the latter? Is science the supreme court of appeal even in the case of a higher value of our mental life which Religion legitimately is? (v) Fifthly, is there any substance in Freud's prediction that the future of an illusion like religion (as he calls it) is doomed altogether? Is religion likely or assuredly to pass out of human life and become an atavistic phenomenon or an anachronism of the past? Even if this vision is to materialise in the future, is it a consummation to be desired and coveted at all? Moreover, is science competent to usurp the place of religion as ardently desired and visualised by Freud? (vi) Sixthly, and lastly, is religion an abnormal manifestation of the human mind or is it to be understood in analogy with a mental disease? Is it to be modelled upon Compulsion Neurosis? Freud actually does this when he states, "We may say that

hysteria is a caricature of an artistic creation, a compulsion neurosis a caricature of religion and paranoid delusion a caricature of a philosophic system." (*Totem and Taboo*).

Before venturing upon the criticism of Freud point by point we should guard ourselves against a grave misunderstanding which often vitiates the critic's approach towards the great psycho-analyst who has left the indelible stamp of his genius upon the history of human knowledge. None could, before Freud, shift the centre of mental gravity from the conscious to the unconscious as decisively and scientifically as he did. The Cartesian identification of the mind with consciousness was, however, dealt a blow by Leibnitz who said that the life of the soul is not exhausted in the conscious but "consists in the development of the unconscious to conscious, of the obscure and confused to clear and distinct ideas or representations" (*Windelband-A History of Philosophy*). But Freud not merely believed in the unconscious on logical or epistemological grounds and left the matter with a complacent assertion of its existence. He worked out every mental state that he came across from its depths into the unconscious and demonstrated the mechanisms by which an unconscious process becomes conscious. Hartmann, again, calls the absolute spirit the "Unconscious." Will and ideation which are the activities of the "Unconscious," are not, according to Hartmann, given in any empirical consciousness. Freud, however, would regard this identification of the unconscious with the absolute soul as unwarrantable and smacking of mysticism. On the whole it may be safely asserted that Freud's treatment of the unconscious has eclipsed all previous attempts at laying it bare. Ernest Jones claims for Freud a place equal to Copernicus and Darwin and he might say that Freud's contributions to Psychology are not less important than those of Immanuel Kant in the field of European Philosophy. Freud is however, treated as a taboo in certain

quarters. But this is based upon a gross misunderstanding. He is charged with Pan-sexualism, for example. Yes, Freud is a Pan-sexualist in the sense that he traces all abnormal processes of the mind to some or other disorder of sex-life. Sex pervades the whole texture of human life from infancy to old age, from birth to death. But this all-pervasive sexuality does not mean the reproductive act as those biased against Freud suppose it to do. The term 'Sex' is used by him in a comprehensive meaning which fact is conveniently forgotten by his opponents. What prohibitive is there in sex? The Tantras also attach a very fundamental importance to it and, as a matter of fact, the Tantras recognise in 'Muladhara,' a centre closely adjacent to 'Svadhithana' or the sex-centre, the ultimate locus or repository of all energy. So there is nothing repulsive or repugnant in Freud to scare anybody away from a close and patient study of his system.

Again, another possible source of misunderstanding must be averted before any criticism of Freud is to be ventured upon. Freud merely aims at presenting an analysis of religion and is not at all concerned with determining its metaphysical character. In other words, he presumes to make only bare statements of facts about religion without making any pronouncement on its value. His analysis of religion consists of judgments about facts and not upon facts. The anatomist, for example, or the morphologist, for instance, shows that in the ultimate analysis, the human body is nothing but some bones, tendons, joints, muscles, neurones, axons, the visceral and the vascular systems and the like. But for the reasons of this analysis they do not claim to deny the unique functions of the physical organism incapable of being traced back to the different structures when taken in isolation from each other. The chemist, again, may explain all physical objects as compounds of several elementary sub-

tances, like Hydrogen, Oxygen, Nitrogen and Carbon, etc., but he does not, on this ground, deny the distinctive character of these products or does not resolve their functions to those of their constituents. Similarly, Freud finds the religious attitude to consist, ultimately of several psychological components. This by no means commits him to deny the value of religion as making a very substantial contribution to human culture and civilization. Firstly, Freud, unambiguously says, "The estimation of the value of religion as truth is not our enquiry Psychologically considered it is an illusion—this is sufficient for us" (*The Future of an Illusion*). Before undertaking the study of Freud's *Psychology of Religion* we should pause for a moment and think upon this important condition which may prevent unnecessary misunderstanding. Secondly, so far as the value of religion is concerned, Freud does not abstain altogether from making an estimation of it. For example, he says, "Religion has performed great services for human culture by restraining the a-social instincts" (*Ibid*). Again he states, "Religion succeeds in saving many people from individual neurosis" (*Civilization and its Discontents*). Thirdly, Freud does not, as it appears to be the case with him, ascribe a purely negative character to religion by making it a product of helplessness. It is, rather, as Freud confesses, "The next, the reaction to it, which seems a remedy against this feeling" that is the essence of the religious emotion.

From the above it is obvious that Freud's approach to religion is that of a scientific psychologist and when he passes any verdict upon the worth of religion it is not at all unfavourable. It is of course to be seen from the sequel whether the above statements can be reconciled with the main body of his theory.

Now let us plunge into an examination of Freud's *Psychology of Religion* as expounded above. Six points of criticism have already been raised in a skeleton form.

We shall dwell upon each of those points and determine whether Freud's analyses and the theory based upon them can be justified on the ground of reasoning, both psychological and philosophical.

Criticism:—

(I) Let us, for the sake of clarity, divide this point into its constituent sub-points.

- (i) Freud associates the religious attitude with the desires and longings of the child. The infantile desires and emotions which were, according to him, fatefully repressed, are revived with all their warmth and vivacity and constitute the very kernel of religion. These childish desires, again, are predominantly of a sexual nature, as he says, and the emotions of love and hatred, awe and reverence centre round them. What, after all, is Freud's justification for this delineation of child-life? He grounds all his assertions about child-mind on psycho-analysis. But Freud himself would admit that his method of "Free Association" as applied to the child is up till now a very dubious one, for the child cannot conform itself to the discipline required of an analysand. Then how does our psycho-analyst satisfy himself about the authenticity of his findings concerning the child's mind? He relies, to be frank, upon adult analyses, i.e., upon the adults' reminiscences of their infancy and the cure effected of the mental disorder concerned with the help of those excavated memories of early childhood. So the knowledge of the infantile mental contents is more a matter of inference than direct observation, though Freud says that

the analysand relives the past days of childhood with all their desires and emotions. Many child psychologists like Curti, among others, are of the opinion that Freud's picture of the child is considerably over-drawn and that his ascription of sex to the infant is an unnecessary exaggeration. Religion certainly has an indispensable relation to the history of child-life, for it does not abruptly spring into existence out of nothing. It exists in the child but not in the manner as Freud portrays it, as if the child is a degraded being who possesses not religion itself but only the components of religion which by themselves are sub-religious in character waiting to be transformed into the religious by the chemistry of unconscious laws. The child as a child is religious in the same sense as a full-grown adult is so. His attitude to the parents is in essence religious. The same submission, the same helpless surrender, the same fear-mixed respect which is called awe, the same love and the same spirit of hostility which derives itself from frustration characterise the child's attitude to the parents as that of the devotee to God. The only difference here is that the object here is the parents instead of God whose emergence awaits the proper growth and development of the child-mind. The evolution of the religious consciousness is a seamless unity, a continuous whole with no wedge of division severing the full-fledged religious attitude of the adult from the parental attitude of the child. Freud has done an inestimable service by tracing religion to the child's life in

relation to the parents. But he seems to be mistaken in regarding the infantile attitude as sub-religious in character. Sex-life is indeed present in the child as the tree is contained in the seedling or the acorn. Freud is right in drawing our attention to this important fact and controverting the traditional conception of immaculate childhood. But this does not justify his drawing the lurid picture of infancy centred round the Oedipus myth.

- (ii) Freud traces the genesis of religion to man's ontogenetic and phylogenetic past. It is, as he says, associated with the Oedipus wish which constitutes the strongest among the repressed contents of the unconscious. The desire of man's early childhood is to kill the parent of the same and possess that of the opposite sex. "The beginning of religion, ethics, society and art meet in the Oedipus complex" (Totem and Taboo). Freud seeks to establish the Oedipus complex by availing himself of the story of Oedipus as depicted by Sophocles and more effectively as a historically established fact by appropriating the Darwinian conception of the primal horde. "A violent and jealous father drives away the growing sons and keeps all the females for himself. The brothers, now grown into adults, unite one day and put an end to the father." Considering this as an inadequate basis for Totemism Freud adds, "One day the expelled brothers joined forces, slew and ate the father, and thus put an end to the father horde." (Ibid).

The above account of the Oedipus complex, is, however, open to a very serious objection. According to Freud, then, the Oedipus wish is found in every individual not as a necessarily inborn trait of his mind but as transmitted in him by the Law of Heredity. A trait which was acquired by man's anthropoid ancestors has been inherited by their human successors. But are acquired properties inherited at all? Freud says that they are. The verdict of scientific opinion, on the other hand, is positively against Freud and in favour of Weismann who holds that only germinal variations are inherited, while acquired modifications are exclusively characteristic of the organism which acquires it and not passed hereditarily to the next generation. Freud, however, would naturally protest against this stumbling block put on his path by Weismann calculated to nullify his Oedipus theory and have among his innumerable votaries Dr. G. Bosc to fight his case out with what unenviable success is to be ascertained by experts in this field.

(iii) Again, Freud's conception of Repression as applied to Religion fails to explain it to our satisfaction. Repression results from resistance which is too strong to be faced and overcome. Repression is man's unconscious escape from a difficult situation and the escapist generally lowers his demands when those pressed for fulfilment cannot be fulfilled. But what do we find in the case of religion? Here the repressed desires instead of being whittled down in the least are, on the other hand, magnified to the utmost degree.

(iv) How does Freud account for the presence of omnipotence in the child? Why is the child so uncompromising in its demands as Freud so readily accepts? If he faced and probed

into the matter he would at once discover the main spring of religion without having to deny religion in the child and explain its emergence in the adult by the magic of the laws of repression and the varied mechanisms by which the unconscious transfigures itself into the conscious. The child's omnipotence of thought is the most rudimentary form of the religious consciousness itself. It is not of the sub-religious stage as Freud supposes. It is the same attitude which the psycho-analyst calls religious in the case of the adult. The child-parent relationship is essentially religious in character and as much spiritual as the adult relation to God. These two differ only in the degree or complexity of development and not in quality or kind.

- (v) Again, Freud regards religion as a regression to childhood. This view reflects his philosophy of evolution. Is evolution creative or repetitive in character? Freud, of course, appears to be an advocate of Repetitive Evolution at least so far as his theory of Regression is concerned. He tacitly assumes that some repressed elements are deposited in the unconscious which remain unchanged. This static element stands in obvious contradiction with the otherwise dynamic background of Freud's system.
- (vi) Lastly, to brand religion as an escapist or a defeatist mentality is an absurd falsification of reality. It is wrong both theoretically and practically as well; theoretically, because it rests upon repression which has been found to be unnecessary for explaining the genesis of religious consciousness, and practically,

because the greatest of heroes ever born in the history of mankind derived all their inspiration from religion. Who, on earth, would dare to dub a Gautam Buddha, a Jesus Christ or a Mohamunad as cowards? Religion is not a cowardly escape from reality but a bold challenge. It is the most potent weapon at man's disposal, defensive and offensive at the same time. It defends man against his impotence and attacks all the problems of reality to give it a new shape and a deep meaning.

(11) Now let us launch upon our campaign against Freud's wrong conception of Religion. All his invectives against religion miss their mark because the meaning of religion as conceived by him is actually misconceived. He takes into consideration the external covering of religion and divests it of its innermost core. He relies upon certain ceremonials or rituals performed by his patients and explain the meaning of religion on the model of these abnormal observances. It must not, of course, be gainsaid that he subjected the lives of some great founders of religion like Moses and applied the principles of his explanation to the facts and incidents of their life. But this also cannot be denied that Freud did not study the subject of religion for its own sake except for exploiting it in order to apply and verify his psycho-analytical principles. He had to twist the meaning of religion into the pattern set for psycho-analysis. So what passes in his system as religion is not religion properly so-called but a caricature of it. Religion is not a mere body of externals but essentially a relation of the human to the divine. The externals are only used as means to the most personal and intimate realization of power, knowledge and bliss. If Freud actually analysed some really religious souls he would be satisfied that his findings concerning

the mechanism of the religious consciousness are far from accurate. Of course Freud is right in holding that desires dissatisfied and repressed may seek satisfaction through religious processes. But this does not mean that religion is a by-product of these repressed desires and their subsequent indirect satisfaction. So desires are undoubtedly gratified through religion. It does not follow from this, however, that religion is these desires themselves, or worse than this, a secondary effect of them. To argue like this would involve the fallacy of mistaking co-existence for causation.

(III) & (IV) For the sake of convenience and economy the third objection is being run into the fourth and both of these dealt with together. Freud assumes science and religion to be poles asunder. Moreover, he believes in and pleads for the superiority of science over religion. Not being contended with this, he urges for a speedy displacement of religion by science.

- (i) Freud argues that religion differs from science both in its method and in its objective as well. The method of science is based upon observation and experiment, while that of religion upon sentiment and feeling. The former is open to all, while the latter is private and personal to an individual. The former can be repeated as often as necessary, while the latter being of a momentary and passing character cannot be brought back or repeated. Again, the aim of religion is surrender or helpless submission to an illusion, i.e., God who is a fantastic creation of our mind, that of science, on the other hand, is the forceful interrogation of nature and its subjugation so that she may be harnessed to the service of mankind.

The above divorce effected between science and religion is misdirected and wrongly done. It is not true that the experimental method is a monopoly exclusively enjoyed by science. Religion also relies upon observation and experiment. It has, indeed, a very intimately personal core just as each fact observed by science has a particularity distinct from that of every other. It is a plain statistical truism that no two leaves of the same tree are exactly similar, for each has a unique peculiarity of its own irreducible to that of any other. The object is not an object as such but one in relation to a subject who observes. The object naturally is bound to be somewhat affected by the subject perceiving it, for it is a common fact to be admitted by every scientist that the subject, however vigilant he might be, cannot divest himself of what is called the Personal Equation or his personal subjective nature which invariably colours the data observed. This subjective colouring of an objective fact may in certain cases be so negligible that it is overlooked by the scientist to his advantage. But this convenient evasion of an irrepressible truth does not a whit falsify it or absolve the scientist from the objection that science, 'after all, is not objective out and out. So the mark or label of subjectivity which is said to stigmatise religion is a defect which in some degree at least, vitiates also science.

(ii) It may, again, be urged that the facts of science are externally observable while those of religion being confined to the individual are not so. This argument, similarly, is one-sided and unjust, for the whole span of a fact is not simultaneously observable and the unobserved residue is merely a matter of inference.

(iii) The above, however, is the negative aspect of our discussion. It is now to be shown that religion also is objective and universal. The

facts of religion also admit of observation and experiment. Religion is not confined to the person or individual concerned but becomes an object of scientific investigation as manifested through human experience. Just as particular facts can be observed, analysed, classified and generalized by a science into universal laws, similarly can the facts of religious experience be scientifically generalized, so that the laws of religion are as much objective and universal as any other law of science. Moreover, the objection that religion is absolutely a personal affair, is an exploded one, for the delivery of the religious soul has been strikingly similar and uniform almost always and everywhere. Besides, the modern science of the Psychology of Religion is a standing refutation of the charge that religion is, after all, an arbitrary subject, a matter of individual likes and dislikes. Thus it is obvious that there is no fundamental difference between the methods or results of science and those of religion. Their methods are equally objective and their results universal at the same time.

- (iv) The true scientific approach should not and does not contradict religion. Science has already been instrumental to incalculable mischief and the mischievous effects of science do not belong to its intrinsic nature but arise from the lack of humility born of its neglect for religion. Religion should be the fountain head of scientific inspiration which it is with men of science like Einstein who attributes the energy and persistence of Kepler and Newton to their "cosmic reli-

gious feeling." As he says, "You will hardly find one among the profounder sort of scientific minds without a peculiar religious feeling of his own." Referring to this cosmic religious feeling Einstein again says, "The feeling is the guiding principle of his life and work, in so far as he succeeds in keeping himself from the shackles of selfish desires. It is beyond question closely akin to that which has possessed the religious geniuses of all ages" (The World as I see it).

From the above follows our answer to Freud's fourth objection. Science cannot sit in judgment over the universal and objective truths of religion or it cannot be regarded as the ultimate court of appeal, for how can it be so when it is segmented in its nature and omits out of account the values of human life which are necessarily the determinants of all facts that the scientist registers. Science, therefore, is not capable of replacing or displacing religion. Even if science were capable of doing so, it should not address itself to the execution of such an ignoble work. The lust for power nurtured by science is at the root of a multitude of evils. For example,* science has made a phenomenal progress in recent times. But has man, as a whole, made a parallel improvement in his morals? Has the world become really a fitter and better place for human habitation? Does man believe man, does the strong and the fortunate protect the weak and the unfortunate? Is the world moving towards peace and prosperity or towards more and more horrible chapters of war and destruction? Are the discoveries of science being harnessed to the gradual uplift of mankind or being increasingly used in the race of mutual elimination? The reason, however, is not far to seek. It is a shameless neglect of the higher values of mental life, the pursuit of science at the cost of the human studies, which mould man,

drive his energies to profitable channels, train the human mind to a proper valuation of varied human needs and thereby enable it to make the best use of the immens resources put at our disposal by science, that lies at the root of this dangerous situation. Wordsworth complained in the agony of his soul, "What man hath made of man." Man is bound to turn all the amenities of life offered by science upon his own annihilation if he is not taught the correct estimation of their worth in the context of human life and like Frankstein, the creation of man, science would one day destroy its creator himself. The remedy is the recognition of those dynamic values that direct all human endeavour. Otherwise science gloated upon the pride of its achievement and intoxicated with the power of its discoveries will head towards self-destruction. Science should, for its own interest, be a little more humble and less ambitious if it is to pave the way for prosperity and progress.

- (v) The answer to the fifth objection has been foreshadowed in the above. Freud predicts that religion is a passing phenomenon bound to be eliminated from human life with the gradual progress of scientific knowledge. In the near future religion will become a thing of the past. This prediction on the part of Freud involves all his misconceptions about the nature of religion and its relation to science. Religion according to Freud is an illusion. It is, as he says, a purely subjective phenomenon wrongly objectified into or projected upon reality. In other words, religion is the externalization of certain repressed desires and a confusion of what we wish to be real with what is really real. Wish is here the father of thought. As in all cases of illusion, here also there is a rea-

listic basis, i.e., there are some repressed desires of love, power and wisdom and there is a distortion of the desires into reality. What is called God is, therefore, not a reality but a projection of our repressed desires for perfection.

- (i) Is religion then, an illusion, a projection, objectification or externalization of our desires? Are worship, prayer or surrender to God the objectless or floating ideas of the mentally deranged? Are they without any anchor in a real object, not as real as any other fact of our life and world? It would be discovered on a close analysis of the religious attitude that it is not less real than any other object which passes as real, or if the final verdict of unreality be allowed to stand against religion the same charge can be laid at the door of any other fact. A purely objective fact has already been shown to be a myth, for the very reason that it is known makes it different from the object as it is in itself. Every ordinary knowledge and every ordinary object of knowledge is an illusion according to Sankara, because in every case what we know is not the ultimate reality or Brahman but an illusory appearance of it due to our ignorance. Even what Freud calls scientific truths are no less unreal than the facts of religion alleged to be unreal in character.
- (ii) The Advaita Vedanta is based upon unassailable facts of psychology, facts of our waking life and the states of dream, sleep and the stage of Turiya which rises above the former,

three. Even admitting Freud's genius as a scientist and psychologist of the first rank, it cannot be gainsaid that Freud has not been able to cover the whole length and breadth of man's mental life confining himself to the mere states of waking and dream to the utter neglect of those realms where man is man in the true sense of the term. If Freud extended his observation to these neglected fields of the mind he would be in a position to assess the meaning and worth of religion. Even the attempt that he has made to fill up these lacunae in his New Introductory Lectures have proved abortive because of his concept of the Unconscious which covers only the states of dream and waking.

- (iii) Religion is not an illusion because even if it be an illusion, it is a universal illusion. In essence, every man is religious. The attitude which a religious man evinces in relation to God is the same as that manifested by every man in relation to his central interest of life. The difference in the latter case is only that of the object towards which the attitude is directed. Any object less than the divine fails to satisfy this attitude, or, in other words, only the divine can elicit the infinite potentialities of man and guide them to their fullest realization. This is in consonance with the essence of Upanishadic teachings which inculcate that there is no joy in the finite—"Nalpe sukhamasti"; joy lies in the *Bhuma* or the Infinite. The urge for the divine is the most fundamental truth of human life. Far from being an illusion it is a psychological fact, an experience of our

child life which cannot be denied without doing violence to the nature of man.

- (iv) That religion is an illusion might have been justified if it had been merely a reaction to the repressed desires for omnipotence of the child. But religion, as we have already seen, is not a mere secondary by-product of these unconscious desires. On the other hand, it is an ultimate fact observed in the child's relation to the parents. The child may not be religious in the conventional usage of the term, but he furnishes us with all the contents of religious life from the moment of his birth. This matter has already been dealt with.

- (v) Now to take up the sixth and the last of the objections stated above. Is religion abnormal, or is it a caricature, as Freud says, of Compulsion Neurosis? Freud, however, redeems religion from being a disease outright by calling it not Compulsion Neurosis itself but a caricature or distortion of the same. But this benefit of doubt is considerably denied by Freud himself when he launches his all-out offensive against religion the main lines of which have already been laid down, or when he undertakes to draw a one-to-one correspondence between religion on the one hand and Compulsion Neurosis on the other. Freud draws close parallels in the development of this neurosis and the evolution of the Jewish doctrine of Monotheism, for example. He finds in the evolutionary process of the Jewish religion an analogy to the genesis of neurosis in two points, *viz.*, (1) both the genesis of neurosis

and religion go back to very early impressions of childhood and (2) among both there are cases which are traumatic ones.¹ Freud also reminds us that the three points, namely, early happening with the first five years of life, the forgetting and the characteristic of sexuality together with aggressivity belong closely together. In this way Freud proceeds to develop the parallels in the formation of neurotic symptoms and the manifestations of religious phenomena.

- (i) But however hard Freud might try to reduce religion into a mental disease or its caricature, his attempts prove abortive. Even taken for granted that the genesis of religion and neurosis meets in the same oedipus complex, this does not advance the case of Freud. The reductive method is a failure in tackling with a value of the higher psychism like religion. The genesis of a phenomenon cannot determine its worth. Religion is not a mechanistic phenomenon to be explained purely in terms of its origin. By its fruits also we are to judge religion and not by its roots alone, as Professor William James says. Religion is purposive in its nature and any analysis of religion which does not take into account its fundamental teleological nature is bound to be wrong.
- (ii) Even so far as their origin is concerned religion and neurosis are different. Religion is an ultimate fact of man's life while neurosis follows as a secondary effect of repression, for the child's attitude to the

¹ The impressions we experience at an early age and forget later are called traumatic.

parents is already religious as we have explained, while neurosis is a step removed from the infantile desires, following in its train as an effect from these when they are repressed.

- (iii) Again, neurosis is due to the subversive manifestations of repressed desires; religion, on the other hand, is the sublimation or utilization of these in channels conducive to social and individual well being. As a result the fruits of the two differ as those of heaven and hell. The neurotic is maladjusted himself and produces wrong adjustment everywhere, while the truly religious man represents a perfectly coherent type of personality himself and moulds a neurotic into a normal individual. A neurotic is a social liability while the saint is a social asset of an inestimable value. If Freud had associated himself with any *bona fide* man of the spirit he would have realized the gross injustice that he meted out to religion.
- (iv) Religion, then is not abnormal. The view that it is abnormal is motivated by a narrowness of outlook which like an ostrich regards its knowledge as the limit of all knowledge. Does Freud know that there are more things in heaven and earth than his psychoanalysis could dream of? Does he recognize the fact that the laboratory of the mind is not so small as he takes it to be? The Unconscious is not confined to the individual's one birth. Freud could not attain to prenatal reaches of the unconscious because he stopped short of the vast realms of the stages of *Nidra* and *Susupti*. Psychoanalysis has no exclusive

monopoly over the Unconscious. The Yoga system of Indian Philosophy and Psychology anticipated it and offered a more comprehensive view of our mental life. It aims at liberating the ailing individual from all conflict and repression and producing an all-round harmony of the whole human personality.

The Indian Approach:—Indian Religion always keeps in view this comprehensive picture of the human mind. There is no contradiction between science and religion. Indian Religion is an experimental science. It admits man's limited nature but also recognizes the unlimited depths of his being. Of these two equally fundamental facts the former provides religion with the raw materials, while the latter acts as the formative principle moulding all desires into its own pattern. These facts are as objective as any other fact of the objective world. The method of handling these facts is also the same. All the numerous sects of Indian Religion agree in essence, and above all, in this, that the truths of religion are not the personal or private property of an individual but experimentable and verifiable by every one conforming himself to certain conditions of the experiment. The natural scientist or the psychologist inspired by the former always complains that the claims of the religious man cannot be proved. Many cases there are in which religion fails to render any satisfactory account of itself. But to generalize from this that religion as a whole is unreliable or deserving of no trust is a very bad piece of logic, indeed.

The Hindus have made exhaustive experiments upon the facts of religious life and are satisfied about the truth of the eternal verities of religion. A sense of insecurity and uncertainty with respect to the things of the world is at the root of all religious endeavour. This is not

derogatory of the value of religion, for it is a fact which cannot be connived at by any body who does not deceive himself. Hinduism is unique among the different world religions, because it does not prescribe the same formulae of religious life for all but lays down different orders of rules and guidance according as they suit the capacity of men of all levels. Its fundamental postulate that God is omnipresent is not a mere article of faith but practised upon experimentally, according to the strict rules of psychology. For example, the Hindu sees nothing idolatrous in the worship of stocks and stones for the worship of anything whatsoever leads to the same consummation *viz.*, the realization of one and indivisible Reality. Rather the worship of all the aspects of nature is considered essential, for otherwise the Absolute remains merely a form without content and is not realised as the Absolute. The merely deductive method is as deficient as the merely inductive method. The Hindu method of worship or religion combines both and enriches itself by the most abstract or conceptual principles of the life divine applied to every phenomenon, natural or supernatural and verified thereby. In the course of worship all names and forms gradually melt away leading to the realization of the same untrammelled Absolute everywhere. Religion, then gives place to a life suffused with the spirit or God. Hinduism promises this life, which knows no fears, no uncertainty and no insecurity, for all who satisfy the conditions of the great experiments upon religion conducted by itself. Is this escapism, infantilism, cowardice or regression?

P. N. BHATTACHARYA.

RISE AND GROWTH OF THE SIKH MOVEMENT IN INDIA

For the last thirty years, I have been making a special study of religions, and have written several articles on Hinduism and Islam. I was eager to know the principles of the Sikh religion. Last year when I went to Calcutta, I had occasion to meet some teachers of the Sikh School at Kalighat and requested them to suggest the names of books, which might enable me to acquaint myself with the principles of the Sikh religion.

I was accordingly sent the following books:—

- (a) The Book of Ten Masters by Mr. Paran Singh
- (b) Philosophy of Shikhism by Mr. Sher Singha Gyani, M.A.M.O.L.Ph.D. (London).
- (c) Essays on Sikhism by Mr. Tega Singha, M.A.
- (d) Message of Sikhism by Mr. Harbans Singha.

The Sikhs believe in the ten Gurus. They are:—

(1) Guru Nanaka. Birth—1469, A.D. Death—1539, A.D. He is the founder of the Sikh religion. He sowed the seed of Hari Nama in the hearts of man. He says, "The master and the disciple are one. Guru Nanak had a passion for farming. He chose finally the life of a farmer. Neither Buddha nor Nanaka insists on a metaphysical philosophy of life. The work before man is really to transmute himself into God.

(2) Angad Nanak—Birth—1504 A.D. death—1552 A.D.

(3) Amar Das Nanak—Birth—1469 A.D. death—1514 A.D.

(4) Ram Das Nanak—He began digging a huge tank in which he proposed to erect a central temple for the Sikhs. It is the site where now stands the city of

Amritsar. The work begun by him was completed by Guru Arjun Dev. Birth—1534. A.D. Death—1581 A.D.

(5) Arjun Dev Nanak. He built another great temple 12 miles away from Amritsar and called it Taran Taran. Chandra killed him by suffocating him in a fresh cow hide in which he was sewn up, when he asked to have his bath in the river Ravi. Arjun said to his disciples, "Such is the will of my God, accept it. Move not, stand calm in your injury." It was on Arjun's initiative that the Bible of the Sikhs, the Guru Granth, took shape and the orally preserved sayings, songs and such other things of the four previous Gurus were written down. Since 1606. A.D. the quietest Sikh faith has become more and more militant.

Birth—1563 A.D. Death—1606 A.D.

(6) Har Gobinda Nanak. He realised wealth must wear a sword. His four sons were educated by Aurangzeb who wanted to convert all to Islam.

Birth—1595 A.D. Death—1645 A.D.

(7) Har Rai Nanak—Birth—1630 A.D. Death—1661 A.D.

(8) Har Kishan Nanak—Birth—1656 A.D. Death—1644 A.D.

(9) Tegh Bahadur. The ruling Emperor was oppressive and while Tegh Bahadur's son approached him and asked him what the remedy was, he replied, "The only remedy, my child, is to offer a God's man as an ablution in this fire; then the people will be secured from the misery." The son said, "Offer myself, father, and save the people." Tegh Bahadur was asked to accept Aurangzeb's religion or to die. He chose death. He was beheaded at Delhi as he sat under the banyan tree reciting Japji. The banyan tree still stands. 1672. A.D. D-1675 A.D.

(10) Govinda Singh Nanak. The Nawab of Sirhind asked his sons to embrace Islam or to die. They said,

"We are sons of the master, Govinda Singh and grand sons of Tegh Bahadur. The joys of sense are for dogs and asses. Sacred death is good death for us." The Nawab asked two Pathan youths to finish them but the Pathans declined saying, "No sir, we will fight the enemy in the battle field, but will not like cowards slay these two innocents." These young sons of the master were made to stand apart from each other and the order was given to build the wall little by little on their tender limbs repeating, at every foot and half foot of construction the same alternative, "Death or Islam."—B 1666. A.D. D 1707 A.D.

Before I describe the background of Sikhism, I should like to set out in details the principles of Sikhism on its theoretical and practical sides and indicate their relation to Hinduism. I have culled the following from the *Philosophy of Sikhism* by Mr. Sher Singh:—

(1) "The Karma and rebirth are accepted by the Gurus but they have undergone a change on account of his religion of grace. The nature of release or Moksha has also been conceived differently on account of the same grace element in his system" (Page 74).

(2) "If there is any book with which the Granth resembles in its implications, that one I think is the Gita" (Page 79).

(3) "The Advaitistic idea is very common both in the Gita and the Granth" (Page 79).

(4) "This Guru makes a new synthesis. He takes up Advaitism as philosophy with Gyan in practical life. The approach to it lies not exclusively in any of the three traditional paths but in the appreciation of the workings of God in every minute detail of our worldly life" (Page 79).

(5) "The Guru does not regard the world as simply an illusion" (Page 83).

(6) "The Vaishnavas are strict vegetarians but the *gurus* did not have any superstition in matters of diet. Respect for the cow was also disregarded. Some of the essential elements of the Sikh religion seem to have been borrowed from the traditional Vaishnavism, for instance out of sixteen modes of worship counted by Ramanuja, fifty per cent. are emphasised in Sikhism." (Page 91-2).

(7) "Nanak deemed it superstition that one should have the scruples to pluck flowers" (Page 96).

(7) (a) "The idea of the will of God, 'Hukum,' submission to it as found in Sikhism was not held by the Hindus as such. It is more Christian and Muslim in its nature." I am afraid the author has missed the essence of Hinduism. What is the lesson of the Gita if not absolute surrender to God? "Abandon all dharma and take refuge in me alone, I will deliver you from all sins and evils." What does it mean?

(8) "How interesting is the resemblance between the Jewish Mantra, Muslim Kalma and the Sikh Mul Mantra: "Thou art one, Thy name is one" (Page 112).

(9) "Islam influenced Sikhism more on the practical side than on the side of its theoretical teachings" (Page 114).

(10) "The Hindu worship was mostly individual" (Page 114).

(11) "God sent a spark—rather extended a part of—from His own self and made it appear like a man" (Page 123).

(12) "Same God is one and many. The Primal Being when He takes the form of Becoming, He is doing so becomes many" (Page 134).

(13) "God is Transcendental and immanent at the same time" (Page 147).

(14) "The very fact of partition brings in limitation" (Page 148).

(15) "Faith or 'Sradha' is an essential element of

a disciple's state of mind in rational discrimination, "Bibek or right knowledge" (Page 154).

(16) "God is both personal and impersonal" (Page 160).

(17) "The idea of evil is simply illusory" (Page 168).

(18) "The Hindu Law of Karma is so strict that there is no scope for a forgiving God" (Page 170).

(19) "The emphasis and the stress which the Guru lays on the aesthetic side does not exist in any other theological system" (Page 174).

(20) "God and the Soul of the individual are in essence the same. God is in the individual soul and the soul is in God. The simile of ocean and the waves, the sun and its rays, the fire and the spark, the heap of dust and its particles indicate the relation between God and the individual souls" (Page 196).

(21) "Death is not the end of man. Ethical and social progress are facts of this world, and belongs to this world. All these values continue after death not in a world beyond this, but in this very world in the form of reincarnation. He does not believe that the ideal of perfection or the perfect good is not attainable as long as we are in the mundane world" (Page 200).

(22) "The Guru says, how the individual soul passes through so many forms of life to reach the stage of man. It passed through all species of mineral, vegetable and animal existences" (Page 201).

(23) "The distinction between the theoretical and practical aspects of a system is very old in India. One is Philosophy and the other is "Marga"—the method of living that Philosophy" (Page 213).

(24) "There are three such modes of life enumerated by the Hindus. They are known as "Karma," "Bhakti" and "Gyana Marga." The mode suggested by the Guru, though containing elements of all the three

"Margas," yet it is not identical with any of them. It is "Wismad Marga" on the practical side and "Nama Marga" on the theoretical side. They are two aspects of the same process. His "Nama Marga" has got the elements of all these three. (Page 213).

(25) "Sikhism emphasises on Bibek-a rational discrimination, in all walks of life and in all phases of mental and moral activity." (Page 218).

(26) "The modern interpretation of the Gita view of Karma, desireless action-was taught by the Guru. But this dedication of Karma to God was not all the paths suggested by the Guru (Page 221).

(27) "The path suggested by the Guru is often called nothing but "Bhakti Marga," and it is true to a point but with some reservations. There are many points common between the two. First of all, the background of what I call the "Wismad Marga" is the emotional attachment of the devotee with the Lord. The basis in both the "Margas" is 'feeling.' Most of the steps suggested by the Guru are the same, as we find in the cult of "Bhakti." Still the Guru made a desirable and a distinct improvement upon the old system.

The stress of Bhakti is mainly on the emotions and the exercise of reason is either discouraged or temporarily suspended. He tried to combine rational discrimination-Bibek Bhuddhi-with feeling-Bhao" (Page 222-3).

(28) "The true knowledge is the realisation of God" (Page 223).

(29) "Nam is a communion of the heart. The man whose heart is thoroughly illuminated is said to contain God" (Page 226).

(30) "Wismad-the wonder-element is our Communion with God and His workings" (Page 237).

(31) "Nam and action taking two forms of *individual honest work for life and now, action, individual and social for one's own self and for others. These are*

the three aspects of what I have called the Nam or the Wismad Marga of the Guru " (Page 242).

(31) " It requires the guidance of an expert " (Page 248).

(32) " He must have faith in the Grace of God. At the same time, man must exert and should not give up efforts. Unless man helps himself, God will not help him." (Page 248-9).

I shall now discuss each point and indicate their relation to Hinduism.

(1) It is in its entirety coincident with the Hindu theory of Karma. The Hindu Philosophy does not eschew the grace element. Rather it is an essential element of our theory. (Vide Re-birth, The Life Divine by Sree Arabinda. Vol. II Page 760-803, Part II Ch. XXII and Supermind descent. Vide Triple Transformations. The Life Divine by Sree Arabinda Vol. II Page 908-53, Part II).

(2) and (3) Entirely Hindu conceptions as admitted by the author himself.

(5) The world is real as it has come out of God who is real. That is how both Sree Arabinda and Santadas explain, the former in his Life Divine and the Gita and the latter in his Gita and other works. Sreejot Kokileswar Bhattacharyya says in his " Advaitabad " that Sree Sankaracharyya has been misunderstood by his commentators. All moderns confirm this view.

(6) Guru Nanak seems to believe that the food we take has no effect on our mind. Science seems to militate against this view. Medical experts of the present times are in favour of vegetable diet as that leads to prolong life and to enhance firmness of character and especially persistence. So the Vaishnavas should not be charged with superstition, if they are vegetarians. That is in consonance with the high ideal of religion and of God they held up before them. Their mistake seems to lie in the

fact that they ignore the environment in the midst of which they live, move and have their being. They have got to confront every day an undeveloped humanity as their neighbour and if they are to live at all and live side by side with the former in peace, free from molestation, they should compromise their ideals a little from a practical standpoint. Life first, religion next. If they were to lose their life in whom would the lofty religious ideals inhere and through whom would it find expression?

Guru Nanak did what was practical and this has saved Vaishnavism, from effacement, though the high ideal has come down a little. The essential elements of Vaishnavism were accepted by the Sikhs and it is this that counts. What was accidental was rejected. To use a sign on the forehead, to put such signs all over the body, to put on a cloth in a particular form—these are things meant for people of a very low calibre and do not at all form part of Vishnavism as it should be.

(7) Not to have the tenderness to pluck flowers cannot be said to be a superstition, though from a practical standpoint and for a higher and a nobler purpose, we are justified in plucking flowers, a man intensely religious like Mahatma Gandhi will think twice before so doing. Poets who have prophetic vision have spoken of the prevalence of spirit every where. We know of Wordsworth warning his sister Dorothy, "Gently touch, for there is a spirit in the wood."

(8) The writer seems to be ignorant of the very famous Upanishadic assertion, "He is one without second."

Whether God may have one name or many names depends upon the standpoint one takes. He may have one name but He may have many names according to the aspects He presents. According to Islam, there are 99 names of God. According to the Upanishads, He is self, while he informs, inspires, bases, He is Iswara while He

manifests the world and governs it. He is Purusha, while he enjoys and experiences. But He is one and indivisible. There is no contradiction in it. In ancient India it was the idea of the spiritual individual that was dominant but the society was not ignored (Page 1151, Vol. II, Part Life Divine).

Yes, the Hindus have always stressed that religion is ever individual and if every individual were to work out the ideal of religion as broached in the Hindu religious scriptures, there would be no necessity for making any change in the social outlook at all.

(10) The basis of society was spiritual and society was a help to him if each man tried to live according to the ideal chalked out by society.

But the times are changed, the circumstances are altered racial and communal jealousies have been strong and each community is trying to dominate the community weaker than itself. Hence there arose a necessity for bringing about a change in our outlook and reorganisation of our social structures so that society may hold its own in the battle of life.

(11) The idea exactly tallies with the Hindu idea. Nos. (12) (13), (14), (15), (16), (17), (18), (19), (20), (21) and (22)—These are Hindu ideas.

(12) This is the basic principle of the Hindu theory of creation. Any Hindu scripture would testify to it. (Vide Sree Arambinda's Life Divine, Chap. XIV, Vol. 1, Pages 184-199).

(13) Hindus never consider God transcendental or immanent but both at the same time. (Vide Life Divine and Essays on the Gita by Sree Arambinda).

(14) The Gyaatri mantra of the Hindus which is absolutely free from any taint of communalism and which is most universal except that it is written in Sanskrit speaks of " *ahi* " or intelligence that distinguishes between right and wrong. The Gita in almost every chapter

speaks of the discriminative intelligence. Whenever we have to make a gift, we should discriminate between Satwik, Rajashik and Tamashik gifts. In the 18th Chapter we find that we should apply our intelligence in understanding the difference between what is Satwik, Rajashik and Tamashik. Sree Arabinda speaks of *buddhi* as intelligence and will and it discriminates and co-ordinates. In the scripture of other communities, we often find that we should render help to any person who might approach us for it, but our scriptures hold that we should examine if the man is really deserving of it, before we extend our help to him. This is not unreasonable. That is why the Hindus are rationalistic.

But this *bibek* helps us only so long as we are on the material, the physical, vital and mental plane and when we realise self-knowledge, this "*bibek*" out-grows its usefulness.

(16) This tallies with the Hindu ideal.

(17) This is exactly what the Hindu scriptures say, (vide *Life Divine*, Vol. I, Chap. XI, Pages 137-168).

(18) This is misinterpreting the Hindu theory of Karma. "If the fundamental truth of our being is spiritual and not mechanical, it must be our soul that fundamentally determines its own evolution, and the Law of Karma can only be one of the processes it uses for the purpose. There is Law and there is also spiritual freedom, ourself is greater than its Karma. If a certain amount of result of past Karma is formulated in the present life, it must be with the consent of the psychic being which presides over the new formation of its earth experience and assents not merely to an outward compulsory process but to a secret will and guidance. That secret will is not mechanical but spiritual. The guidance comes from an Intelligence which may use mechanical processes but is not their subject.

Indian astrology which considers all life circumstances to be Karma, mostly predetermines in the graph of the stars, there is still provision made for the energy and freedom of the being which can change or cancel past or much of what is so written or even all but the most imperative and powerful binding of Karma. Any mechanical law of Karma can not be accepted as the sole determinant of circumstances and of the whole machinery of re-birth and of our future evolution." (Page 786-7. Life Divine, Vol. II Chap. XXII).

(19) The Hindu Conception of God is most perfect. This is from Sree Arambinda's Essays on the Gita.

"The Supreme Divine, God possesses both the Infinite and the Finite and in whom the personal and the impersonal, the self and the many existences, being and becoming, the world action and the supreme peace, *Prabritti* and *Nibritti* are united, possessed together and in each other."

"God is an ever unmanifest Infinite ever self-impelled to manifest Himself in the finite."

Nos. (20) (21) and (22). No. (20) Essentially a Hindu idea.

(21) Essentially a Hindu idea (vide Life Divine, Vol. I, (Page 146-48).

The aim of human life is to manifest the divinity in man, even on this side of the earth and this is what Sree Arambinda is endeavouring to realise in his Asram.

(22) This is the Hindu Theory of evolution and modern science lends support to it. (Vide Life Divine).

(23) Yes, that is quite rational.

(26) That is what the Hindu thinkers have always explained.

(31) and (32). Santa Das in his "Brahmabadi Rishi and Brahma Vidya" says that of all knowledge, the knowledge of God is the most difficult and if knowledge

of anything else requires a guide, how much more does the knowledge of God.

(31) This is exactly coincident with the Hindu ideals.

Nos. (24) (25), (26), (27), (28) and (30) I come now to these points as they do not become clear to me and create confusion.

(24) Psychology tells us that these three paths are necessary for us in every sphere of activity and spiritual science stresses that we are to follow these methods to earn a spiritual life. They are not mutually exclusive but dominant. If the Guru's method has got elements of all these three, it is not something separate but a development, an evolution out of them and we find the Upanishads subscribing to our view. I shall come to this point again later on.

(25) I have already touched upon this point.

(26) The modern interpretation of the Gita is not confined to desireless action but to Karma, Jnan and Bhakti. Equal stress is laid on each when the climax of spiritual height is reached. Karma, Jnan and Bhakti are unified. (Essays on the Gita by Sree Arabinda).

(27) Here the writer seems to speak of it as Bhakti Marga with a difference that there was an element of rational discrimination in it not dissociated from Jnan and so there we find the combination of Jnan and Bhakti, though such a Jnan is not superior Jnan, para Jnan.

Such a discriminative Jnan works only on the material plane, Bhakti, too, admits of two kinds, para and apara, superior and inferior. If it be superior Bhakti to which the writer refers, how can it combine with rational discrimination which belongs to a lower plane. If it be aesthetic intuition, as the author seems to mention in one place, we come to the stage of superior Bhakti, para Bhakti. At any rate it is un-intelligible to me when the author speaks of it as a fourth Marga.

The author's attention is invited to Sree Arabinda's

Chapter in the Life Divine on the Triple Transformations where the idea has been very lucidly and psychologically explained in the light of spiritual Experience. (Vide Life Divine. Vol. II Page 1).

(28) and (29) What I have said in No. (27) holds good here also.

(30) and (31) These are universal laws. I do not think any religion omits them.

II

From the above, I think I have successfully established that so far as the theoretical teachings are concerned, "Sikhism" has based itself entirely upon Hinduism and it is the theoretical ideals that count in our spiritual life.

A scientist builds up a theory and takes practical steps to prove the theory. A philosopher broaches a theory of God, man and the universe and takes action to practically give effect to it in his own way and according to his own method.

The method adopted by the Sikhs is not at all different from the method adopted by one section of the Hindus on the religious side. The Hindu religion being very comprehensive does not exclude the method, Japshi and the procedures auxiliary to it. (Vide point No. 23 above). Here the author refers to the method adopted for spiritual realisation as distinguished from the Social Customs. The Social Customs are not the methods.

So I do not agree when the author says that Islam influenced Sikhism on its practical side. It would be more appropriate to say that Islam influenced Sikhism on its social side. Our social side may be common with others and yet religiously we may differ, as in the case of the Christians, the Jews and the Moslems.

It is the religious ideals that count and if these tally, we cannot and should not say that the two religions are different.

The following from page 55 of the author's book will lend support to what I have said above.

"The Guru's idea was to present to the World a book which should serve as a text book of universal religion and something which is essential and common to the truly religious side of faith. The social, practical, the secular and ritual aspects of a religion are relative to time, place and other environments. These things change and should not, according to the Gurus, form the subject matter of a holy book, whose teachings are to guide men to spiritual peace at all times and in all countries. The teachings of the Granth are primarily spiritual and secondarily philosophical. Peace of the soul is the constant aim before the Guru." The Gita is also such a book bereft of local and ephemeral elements and it contains just the essence of all religions being most catholic, universal and non-sectarian.

Again the author says, "The universal truth or that which is intrinsically true is the same in every advanced religion and the Guru, in fact every prophet accepts these universal elements of all faiths."

That Hinduism was a very ancient religion is admitted by all and Khazan Singh holds that Hinduism was the only religion in the ancient world. When Miss Miller of America married the Holker of Indore and became a Hindu, she answered in reply to a query that she had not abandoned Christianity, while she accepted Hinduism as the latter was comprehensive and included in it, the ideals of Christianity.

BUDHISM AND SIKHISM

The fundamental difference between Buddhism and Sikhism is that the former is non-violent under all circumstances, while the latter is violent under certain conditions.

Abolition of the caste system, congregational prayer, the idea of brotherhood and the use of the vernacular for

teaching religion is common between the two religions, but these are organisational unity and although very important from the practical social standpoint are not very patent in advancing individual religious life.

The author says that the resemblance between the Gyatri Mantra, Muslim Kalma and the Sikh Mul Mantra may be accidental or may be psychologically explained, as he says, for human nature has got similar spiritual and mystic experiences and habits. The probability is that the Guru owes it to the Hindus.

Speaking of its indebtedness to Christianity and other religions, the author continues, "All our conclusions are as yet probable." Christianity has been supposed to have been influenced by the teachings of Zoroaster, Budha and others."

Rev. Farquhar has shown, quoting from the Gita and the Bible, the identity of ideals between the two. There is an opinion in certain quarters that Christ came to India and received religious instructions from the Brahmans. So the indebtedness of Sikh religion to other religions than Hindu is not so well grounded as one might suppose.

It appears so far as the theoretical ideals go, it was Vedantism and Vaishnavism that influenced Sikhism and these two sources have elements almost unique and from these we shall not be reasonable if we go to sources other than these two. Guru Nanak was certainly entirely influenced by the spiritual environment in the midst of which he lived constantly and to which he owes his birth and life, I mean the Hindu influence and this is natural. It is also reasonable to suppose that so far as social changes go, he was affected by Islamic ideals.

It is a historical fact that it was the oppression of the Muslims that forced the organisation of the Sikh religion and the Sikh social fabric.

The conditions of the country were almost similar to what they were before the partition of India.

"The Brahman quite submissive to his Muslim neighbour was tyrannical against his own Sudra brother."

Govinda's predecessors had tried all possible means to eradicate evil but to no visible success. The evil was organised and was spreading on the wings of sword. To face it virtue must be organised and must get the help of the same sword. The organisation of the Sikhs in the body of the Khalsa was the result.

The Guru equipped them with the same sword which became for them, "an emblem of honour and self-respect, for all times to come." In his letter to Aurangzeb, written in Persian, the Guru says, "when affairs have gone beyond all means, it is virtuous to take a sword in hand. I have been forced to come to arms and to enter a battle-field." The purpose for which Govinda became 'violent' was non-violent. In the philosophy of the Guru, the action of a man would be violent if after realising that he cannot by so-called non-violent means face evils, he chooses either to submit passively to it or to tolerate it in any form. The sword of a reform is a surgeon's knife. If he can not cure an abscess by an internal medicine, so much the better. The next course will be to use an ointment for an external application. Failing both, the knife is the only remedy.

Guru Govinda Singha could not wreck single-handed, the Muslim empire which was based on tyranny, injustice and intolerance, he wanted an army. He depended on the Hindus. Sikhs were not many in number. The Hindu mind had become submissive and was largely dominated by the *sattvik* Brahmin with "Ahimsa Paramah Dharma" his highest religion. Just as the Brahmins had come to his father to save this faith, by sacrificing his life, so it was now his turn to ask them and their followers to join his defensive army. The wise Brahmins wanted to put him off by saying that only if the goddess Durga could be made visible as she was made by

Bhima or Arjuna, the success of Guru's mission could be ensured. The Guru wanted to demonstrate the futility of all such beliefs.

SIKH MOVEMENT

III

The holiest Brahmins from Banares were sent for and the people of the whole district were asked to contribute towards the great burnt offerings for Durga. The Brahmins continued for nine months to persuade *Durga* to appear. They were supplied with whatever they demanded. One day to the surprise of all, the chief Brahmin disappeared with his assistants. The Guru asked all the materials collected for the incensed smoke to be thrown into the firepit. A great flame rose. When the people came from far and near, the Guru unsheathed his sword and said, "Here is the real goddess, she will perform all the deeds which the Brahmins attribute to Durga." He raised his sword and appealed to those present to test the efficacy of that symbol of Sakti and to join his armies.

The author adds, "Corruption, degradation and treachery stalked openly through the land. Murders of the most possible type, robberies of a most outrageous and shocking character were the order of the day."

Barbarities were perpetrated and the Guru asked, "Who had done all this?" The effect of oppression was the worst on Indian women. The answer was, "His will." The Guru Nanak then put questions to God, "If Babar was simply a tool in the hands of some supreme will, why did not then the Lord of us all feel pain when there was so much slaughter and lamentation? I will not find if two equally strong forces face each other, but when a lion falls upon a herd, the master should have some animosity. The Guru then determined that the people

should not remain a herd of cows but must be turned into a nation of lions.

These are what we find in *Essays of Sikhism*:—

(1) "It is said that if his own work was creative in any way it was only on the social side i.e., it was only corruption in society that he attacked, not the doctrines on which that social system was based." (Page 9).

(2) "If Sikhism had made a mark among the religions of the world, it must have had, inspite of what it appears now, a substantial originality given to it by its founder." (Page 9).

(3) "He recognised no incarnation, no direct revelation, no human intercession on behalf of man in the court of heaven." (Page 10).

(4) "He separated pedantic Philosophy from Religion." (Page 10).

(5) "His body was the temple of the supreme Being and instead of being mortified, it deserved to be cherished as a precious gift of God." (Page 13).

(6) "Religion does not consist in words." (Page 16).

(7) "He who looks on all men as equal is religious." (Page 17).

(8) "Nonsense is caste." (Page 22).

(9) "It is work that is tested." (Page 22).

(10) "Truth is higher than everything, but higher still is true living." (Page 23).

(11) "Sikh (Sanskrit Sish) means a disciple."

(12) "Guru Govinda Singh baptised the sikhs into Singhs or lions calling each of them a host in himself."

(13) "Guru Govinda made the Punjab safe for the Panjabis." (Page 28).

(14) "Guru Govinda had Bengali on his tongue, being born at Patna which formed part of Bengal."

(15) "All men are the same, although they appear different under different local influences" (Page 30).

(16) "The aim of life is not to get salvation or heavenly abode but to develop the best in us, which is God." (Page 40).

(17) "For your good action may procure for you a better birth but emancipation is from Guru alone." (Page 40).

(18) "There was the Formless, one Himself." (Page 41).

(19) "It is our own sense of Ego placed by God in us." (Page 49).

(20) "The way of religion is not a set of views or doctrines but a way of life lived according to a definite mood." (Page 51).

(21) "Khalsa means the personification of the Guru himself." (Page 54).

(22) "Guru Govinda Singh was stabbed by a Pathan."

(23) "After the death of Guru Govinda, the personality and the word were separated. The Panth was invested with the personality of the Guru and the incorporated word became the Gyan Guru. The Khalsa Panth was to be the Guru in future." (Page 58).

(24) "Matter and mind are not antagonistic or exclusive of each other but matter contains mind and both are derived from God. Human body is earned by spiritual labours of many generations." (Page 77).

(25) "Life is fruitful in the company of those who are strong and yet they suppress their strength and are humble." (Page 83).

(26) "The Sikhs should perform all ceremonies according to the Sikh ritual, which consists of prayer." (Page 117).

(27) "The Sikhs have abolished the annual killing of a goat before the Akal Takht." (Page 145).

- (28) (a) " When Taimur took charge of the Punjab in 1757, the first thing he did was to destroy the Amritsar temple and fill up the sacred tank. When in 1758, under two Jassa Singhs, they won complete victory over the Punjab, the first thing they did was to restore the temple and the tank."
- (b) " When the Durrani came again in 1762, he again demolished the temple, polluted the the sacred tanks with the blood of cows and took away the Holy Book to Kabul."
- (c) " The Sikhs restored the temple in 1763."
- (d) " In Delhi a mosque was erected on the spot where the body of Tegh Bahadur was burnt."

" When Sarder Baghel Singh got control over Delhi, he raised temples over the places sacred to the memory of Tegh Bahadur and others." (Page 176).

I shall now note each of the above one by one.

(1) I share this opinion in its entirety and I have tried to establish it before and I also endorse the view that (2) the founder of the Sikh religion gave it an originality that enabled it to hold its own against enormous odds, successfully combated the unfavourable environment that confronted it and to become a potent factor in the evolution of India.

Soldier-saint, which appears to be an oxymoron, has become a living fact and if to-day India is very proud of the achievements of this religion, it is justly so.

(3) Santa Das says-and it is dictated by common sense-that a teacher or a guide is certainly necessary to guide us through the correct path for self-realisation. It is not a question of incarnation. I personally do not believe in incarnation, Mahatma Gandhi does not so believe. He says one who has become great spiritually

or morally, is considered as incarnation. Sree Arambinda believes in incarnation, but he says, if one believes and acts up to the ideal held up before us by an incarnation or of an incarnation that does not prejudicially affect his spiritual life, I share this view.

An incarnation is an outward manifestation, even if we do not think it possible and believe in the eternal Krishna in us, that will spiritually help us. The object of an incarnation, Prophet, or Reformer is the same, to advance human spiritual welfare. So instead of quarrelling over technical differences, let us look deeper and sift out the spiritual essence.

(4) To a cultured man, it is difficult to divorce Philosophy from Religion. (Vide Life Divine Ch. XXIV. Vol. II Part II P. 845-907). Pedantry is certainly bad and need be eschewed.

(5) That is the ideal of the Gita and the same runs through the whole of the Life Divine. The aim of human life is to unfold the divinity in us and in this body.

Every time we are born, we get fresh opportunity of self-development. We should take proper care of the body so that we avail ourselves of the opportunity of self-development.

If we subject the body to sufferings and destroy it we are deprived of this opportunity. Evolution is thus retarded. But there is, of course, one school that adopts self-mortification as the means of spiritual advancement.

(6) That is the Hindu view as well. Religion is not a creed but conduct, says Sir Radhakrishnan.

(7) The Gita and other scriptures emphasise it and hence we get what is called "Samadharman" in the Gita and elsewhere.

(8) Kaa. in its present form, caste is no more. Division of labour developed it. It has out-grown its usefulness and need be revised now. (See Introduction, Volume on the Gita Part II).

(9) Yes, that is what Hinduism has always stressed.

(10) Yes, I have already referred to it in (6).

(11) and (12), (13) and (14) These are given for informations of the readers (12) It is a great and welcome change.

(15) Every thoughtful and cultured man will have this view. Hindus, Moslems, Christians etc., are artificial distinctions created by human beings and there will come a time when these distinctions will disappear and man will think in terms of humanity.

(16) Vide (5).

(17) I have touched upon it previously .

(18) This is exactly what Sree Arabinda says in his Life Divine and this is what the Upanishads say.

(19) Yes, Ego is a power of the Infinite (Life Divine by Sree Arabinda).

(20) I quite agree and have already referred to it.

(21) (22) (23) This is for information of the reader.

(24) This is exactly what Sree Arabinda says in the Life Divine and this is the scientific theory of evolution.

(25) Exactly what our scriptures have always preached, but the present day Hindus have become weak and imbecile and degraded.

(26) A welcome innovation which the Hindus ought to follow.

(27) A Good reform. The Hindus are veering round to this view. Other religions ought to accept it. It is simply barbarism. One Pir in Sind has one lakh of disciples who have vowed themselves to this ideal. Educated youngmen are against sacrifice.

(28) It was possible for the Sikhs to undo the wrongs done to them because of the infusion of the new spirit by Guru Nanak and the other Gurus, and when the author

says that a substantial originality was given to Sikhism by the founder, I think one should say this is the originality imparted.

Let me now ransack "Messages of Sikhism."

(1) Many are the forms in which the Lord manifests Himself. (Page 14).

(2) (a) Call him the true Guru, who has knowledge of God.

(b) He is the true Guru, who understand the True One. (Page 53).

(3) Prophets created by God in different ages are known as His Avatars. (Page 67).

(4) Recognise Him in yourself. (Page 93).

(5) His name is the real Tirtha. (Page 99).

(6) What can a man get without exertions? (Page 118).

(7) Know Yourself. (Page 150).

(1) (2), (4) and (7) are entirely Vedantic ideas.

(5) Every spiritually improved man will admit it.

(6) This is very true so long as we are on the material plane but we ignore it.

Mr. Teja Singh says that the question whether a Sikh is a Hindu had better been left unraised in these days. I think his view is sound.

I have already given my own opinion on the question. If there are principles, ideals, doctrines on which a religion is based be taken as the criteria of identity, the Sikhs are certainly Hindus as the Brahmans, the Saivas, the Saktas, and Sects, kindred to these are Hindus.

To sum up: A Sikh is he who believes in one God, the ten Gurus, the Guru Granth Shahib, the Sikh Scripture, lives his life according to the Sikh principles, has no other religion.

According to Sikhism, there is one God, the creator, whose name is true, devoid of fear and enmity, immortal, unborn, self-existent, great and beautiful. Sikhism abolishes caste system, class-exclusiveness, untouchability, idolatry, concretion of widows, immurement of women infanticide, tobacco, smoking, use of wine and others intoxicants etc.

It inculcates Fatherhood of God, and brotherhood of man, religious and social equality for all mankind, truth, and truthful living, gratitude, philanthropy and all other moral and domestic virtues.

PHATIK CHANDRA GANGOOLY.

SOME MYSTIC CURRENTS IN BENGALI LITERATURE

Mysticism, its meaning and application. The word Mystic owes its origin to the Greek Mysteries. It is used there in the sense of one who is being initiated into esoteric knowledge about the divine about which he must keep his mouth shut,—or as one who still has his eyes shut in the sense that he is not yet realised. The Neo-Platonists explained the meaning as deliberately shutting the eyes to external things. (1) Dean Inge however gives a very comprehensive description of mysticism in its modern connotation when he says, "Mysticism has its origin in the raw material of all religion and philosophy—the dim consciousness of the Beyond which is part of the nature of all human beings, the obstinate questionings of sense and outward things,—Mysticism arises when we try to bring the higher consciousness into relation with the other contents of the mind."

In our opinion, mysticism existed long before the human mind was developed as a thinking and reasoning machine, and is therefore man's first method of rising to the higher knowledge. We find its primitive beginning in the low order of trances which are still to be found amongst tribal peoples. These trances were supersensuous conditions when knowledge beyond the power of the mind to perceive was communicated to the primitive mind by a sort of temporary enhancement of the sensual faculties, as well as a blocking of the outward sense and turning it inward. It may be described as a sort of involuted condition, a kind of recoil of the outward being which allows the inner being, the soul, to see and perceive. The primitive mind through which these percep-

(1) Dean Inge.—*Christian Mysticism*.

tions had to communicate themselves was however a blurred or dark mirror, which is the reason of the enigmatic nature of oracular utterings, dark sayings which were distorted first by the mind of the communicant and again by the minds of those to whom the sayings were uttered. As mystic knowledge at its primary stage was often associated with the gaining of supernatural powers which could be used for both good and ill, according to the ethical level of the person concerned, early and medieval Christianity looked upon these supernatural powers as Satanic. The relationship between mysticism and magic would indeed be an interesting study, but it seems wrong to absolutely deny the connection between the two. Supernatural or magical powers are associated with highly spiritual personalities like Christ, whose miracles, though they need not be taken as proof of his spiritual elevation still need not be denied as mere invention. In the Indian Yoga systems, though supernatural or magical powers are never regarded as the goal, in certain forms of yoga like the yoga of the Natha Yogis or of the Tantrics, they come as a natural corollary of their yogic practices and is termed by them as the eight *aisvaryas* (riches). At eight stages of the practice of the *vidya* (Mantra) these powers are attained. Mantra is conceived of as the energy of the Mahalingam as well as ambrosia (*amrtam*) which removes old age. It is therefore the cause of both creation and preservation. *Nada* is of two kinds struck and unstruck and originates in the *pinda* the seat of the ultimate sound which in the body is located at the *maledhara*, below the navel. *Nada* in its evolution from less to more distinct gives rise to letters syllables and speech. The mantras or mystic formulas which are used in invoking magical powers have an analogous development (1).

(1) *Kundajana Nirupa—Prabodh Chandra Bagchi—Introduction page 42.*

Tantras have the power of communicating both magical and supernatural powers. Amongst the former we would mention such powers as making nets to make evil influences ineffective, power to enter another body, power to make an image speak, power to create troubles in another's mind, power to kill another, power to propitiate antagonistic deities etc. Amongst the latter, power to remove disease, power to associate with yoginis, power to remove the effects of old age, power to rise above the earth, power of furious speed, power to assume various forms etc. The highest of these supernatural powers is the control over creation and destruction. The Sadhaka is then said to be like Siva himself. The mind of the Sadhaka in this highest state is described as *unmana* or turned upwards. It is fixed in vacuity, is devoid of all thought, and the Yogi is lost in himself, unmoved by any sound, drinking of amrtam or ambrosia at the Brahma-randhra or highest cakra of the body (1). In Indian mysticism, we see therefore that magical and mystical powers, though not the aim, is not decried as coming from the devil. Apart from the Tantras even in Patanjali whose aim is concentration and Samadhi, (a state of identity of the individual and supreme souls, the abiding absolutely in Brahman), we are told that when the *sadhaka* fixes his attention on a particular spot and the state of subjugation (*samyama*) is attained the *sadhaka* becomes master of certain superhuman powers which are the subordinate fruit. Again we are told that when the *sadhaka* practices spells mortifications and meditation along with emancipation, which is the highest end, five perfections or *siddhis* are attained. The reason why both Christian and Sufi mysticism decry supernatural or magical powers is because it might tempt the *sadhaka* from his union with God. In both Sufi and Christian Mysticism

(1) Kankajana Murmu—Prabodh Chandra Bagchi—Introduction
Page 33-34.

the mind becomes intent on or is commingled with the passion or love of God. It is that *samadhi* which in *Patanjali* is described as '*sananda*' or beatific. This state of ecstasy is very well described in *Plotinus*, "The soul when possessed of intense love of Him divests herself of all form which she has even that which is derived from Intelligence; for it is impossible when in conscious possession of any other attributes to either behold or be harmonised with Him. Then the soul must be neither good nor bad nor aught else that she may receive Him only." It is further described that when the soul is in his state the One appears and there is nothing in between and they are no more two but one and that she would not exchange her bliss for the highest heavens. It must not however be thought that in either Christian or Sufi mysticism the soul only enjoyed the ecstasy of divine union. In this state, secret knowledge inconceivable to the mind was communicated to the soul about the nature and essence of God. There are many ways that this mystic knowledge is attempted to be expressed. Thus *St. Clement* adopts the negative way which we also find in the *Upanisads*. He tells us since God is above Being we cannot say what He is but only what He is not. In speaking of the ecstatic union *St. Dionysius* says, "To me it is right to speak without words, to understand without knowledge, that which is above words and knowledge; this I apprehend to be nothing but the mysterious silence and mystical quiet which destroys consciousness and dissolves forms. Seek therefore silently and mystically the perfect and primitive union with the Arch-Good." But *Dionysius* describes the soul as bi-partite and tells us that while the higher portion of the soul sees the divine images directly the lower does so by symbols. The latter are not to be despised as they are true impressions of the divine characters and necessary steps for us to rise to the one indivisible truth by analogy.

This is the way in which the scriptures are to be used.

And this brings us to the very important point as to the language used for the expression of mystic or revealed knowledge. The *Caryapadas* or Buddhist mystic songs of the Sahaj cult with which we shall deal presently, are written in what is described as the *Sandhya-bhasa* which was at first interpreted by M. M. Pundit Haraprasad Sastri as the Twilight language and is said to have been used in order to keep the knowledge revealed in the songs secret. Later scholars have however more correctly interpreted it as *Sandha-bhasa* intentional language. The experiences of the *sadhaka* being incommunicable in language certain words were used with the intention or purpose to express this knowledge. Thus a sort of mystic language grew up understood by those who practised the cult and had similar experiences, though when taken literally they may at times seem absurd. Thus if we take the second song of the *Caryapadas*, the poet Kukkuri, even while himself singing it, is quite conscious of how impossible it is for the uninitiated or even unrealised *sadhaka* to enter its meaning.

“ The milk of the tortoise cannot in a
vessel be held.

The fruit of the tamarind tree the
crocodile eats.

From the court-yard near the room or
hear Avadhuti

Kanet the thief has taken at midnight.

The father-in-law sleeps the daughter-
in-law wakes,

Kanet the thief has stolen from whom
shall we ask?

In the day the daughter-in-law is fearful
of time

When night comes she goes to the
mountain of desire.

Such kind of song Kukkuri the poet sings
(Caryapada 2)

In a million not one heart can in its
meaning enter.

Our own idea is this sort of intentional language, which has been used in all scriptural texts, and it is this which makes them so liable to misinterpretation. The *Rg-veda* was certainly written in this kind of intentional language. Writing about the hymns of the *Rg-veda* Sree Aurobindo tells us, "We are in the presence of a great scripture of the mystics, with a double significance, one exoteric and the other esoteric, the symbols themselves have a meaning which makes them a part of the esoteric significance and element in the secret teaching and knowledge.....At the same time the exoteric sense need not be merely a mask; the *ṛks* may have been regarded by their authors as words of power, powerful not only for internal but external things. A purely spiritual scripture would concern itself with only spiritual significances, but the ancient mystics were also what we call occultists, men who believed that by inner means outer as well as inner results could be produced, that thought and words could be used so as to bring about realisations of every kind, in the phrase common in the *Veda* itself, both the human and divine." (1) Actually in much of the scriptures which claim to be revealed or inspired there are parallel meanings which are equally true. It is as if sheath after sheath have to be removed before the innermost meaning is revealed. In the *Vedas* there is the historical legend, the naturalistic worship, the ritualistic worship, and the inner spiritual *sādhanas*. These meanings need not be taken as at variance with each other. The Natural deities may be taken as the

(1) *Secrets of the Vedas-ṛkya* edited by Sree Aurobindo.

external faces of those higher spiritual powers that are really described by the Vedic seers. Thus Agni may be the Nature power presiding over the outer element of fire and the fire of the ceremonial sacrifice, but Agni is also "the luminous guardian of the truth shining out in its own home." Many words such as "go" stands both for cow and light. As Sree Aurobindo tells us "Under pressure of the necessity to mask their meaning with symbols and symbolic words the Risis resorted to double meanings a device easily manageable in the Sanskrit language where one word often bears several different meanings but not easy to render in an English translation and very often impossible." Again legendary and allegorical veils have often been super-imposed for the popular preaching of the cult, whose mystic meaning remains intact. The crop of legends and allegories that have grown around the Kṛṣṇa, Siva and Sakti cults may be taken as illustration. Dr. Sasibhusan Dasgupta has commented on the style of the medieval mystic poets of India which he calls enigmatic. "Our own idea is that the outward absurdity is only a mask for the deeper truths of sādhanā which the words signify and which is only gradually revealed to the initiate according to his progress in the sādhanā and his ability to understand the true meaning of the terms by his yogic realisations. The difficulty that scholars feel in interpreting these mystic songs, is because things are described in symbols whose reality only the sādhanā realised in the cult can understand so that to the unrealised it appears occult, and the present depressed position of these cults, which having been long confined to ignorant men have lost their high character, so that the words used are interpreted in an external and crude way, giving the outermost meaning.

If India is the home of Mysticism it is in Bengal that the mystical heart of India beats. From the ninth or tenth century when the first *Caryapadas* or Buddhist

Mystic Songs of the *Sahaja* cult were composed, (1) which happen to be the first literary productions in Bengali available to us, up to the twentieth century which has given us the fine songs of Upanisadic mysticism of Ravindranath, Bengal may boast of an unbroken stream of mystic songs, spontaneous outbursts of mystic knowledge which has made the complex mind of Bengal its instrument of expression. It is an undoubted fact that it is in song that mystic or occult knowledge finds its best medium for expression, for through song direct knowledge can be most directly communicated. It is the literary form least interfered with by thought, and the reasoning and logical mind there has the least influence. It moves by an inner logic as also by an inner rhythm, and the metrical and rhythmic word is supported by musical sound into which the idea is liberated avoiding the bondage or fixation of thought.

We shall here deal with the three main mystic movements which have endowed Bengali literature with its fine substance of mystic poetry,—the *Sahaja* the *Sakta*, and the *Vaisnava*. The *sahaja* cult shows two distinct stages, the Buddhist and the post-Caitanya stages of the *Sahaja* cult. We shall however deal with the Buddhist *Sahaj* cult where we get the cult in its purest form, unalloyed by its mixture with *Vaisnavism*, though any seeped study of the post-Caitanya *Sahaja* cult will show that the adoption of the terms of *Vaisnava* mysticism are indeed as superficial to it as the adoption of the terms of *Mahayana* Buddhism is to the Buddhist *Sahaja* cult. In dealing with *Vaisnava* mysticism we shall illustrate from the songs of *Candidasa* because of its absolute quality and its freedom from poetic rhetoric. In dealing with *Tantric* mysticism we shall illustrate from the songs of

(1) There is much difference of opinion.—The date of the *Kaula-nana Nirmaya* by *Matryendranath* is fixed as 9th century by Dr. *Probodh Chandra Bagchi*. Since *Law* is identified with *Matryendranath* and he is the earliest of the *Caryapada* writers we may take the 9th and tenth centuries as the date of these songs.

Ramprasad in whose songs Tantric mysticism seems to us to have found their highest fulfilment.

The Sahaja cult in Bengali literature. Though Sahaja-Yana is regarded as one of the Yanas of Mahayana Buddhism or more properly Tantric Buddhism, M. M. Pundit Haraprosad Sastri seems to consider that it had an earlier origin which is lost in darkness. (1) Dr. Sasibhusan Dasgupta also thinks that Tantricism from which the Sahaja cult sprang is an ancient religious cult of India manifesting itself sometimes as Hindu and sometimes as Buddhist. (2) Our own idea is that Tantricism had its origin in the esoteric and erotic practices which were associated with Vedic mysticism against which Buddhism revolted. When these esoteric and erotic practices were on the point of debasing the Vedic religion, there was a reformist movement in which the deeper spiritual import of the Vedas was culled and fixed in the higher thought and realisation in the Upanisads, and Vedic ritualism was relegated to a secondary position. With the rise of Pauranic Hinduism and the subordination of the homa sacrifice to Puja in which some of the ritualism was symbolically incorporated, the Vedic mystics who still practised the earlier esoteric and erotic rites, (hints of which we get in some Upanisads), spread amongst the non-Aryan population whose gurus they became. This Vedic Tantricism as we would call it for want of a better name got mixed up with Saiva mysticism which was already part of the religion of the indigenous non-Aryan population, and this composite Tantricism found its way into both Hinduism and Buddhism so that we find them in the latter emerging as the various yanas of Mahayana Buddhism or more correctly Tantric Buddhism. Saiva mysticism in its purer form is found in the Natha cult, but Tantricism became so heterogeneous

(1) *Modern Buddhism*—Introduction by M. M. Pundit H. P. Sastri.

(2) *Obscure religious cults*—Sasibhusan Das Gupta page 20.

and mixed that it would be difficult to separate the various strands which have entered into its composite nature. Still its essence may be taken as the awakening or evocation of the Divine Sakti, the flaming strength of the Divine Will, whose image was the mystic fire of the Vedic Sacrifice. Of the doctrine of the Vedic mystics Sree Aurobindo writes "The image of the sacrifice is sometimes that of a journey or voyage; for it travels, it ascends; it has a goal—the vastness, the true existence, the light the felicity—and it is called upon to discover and keep to the good, the straight and the happy path, to the goal, the arduous yet joyful road of the truth. It has to climb led by the flaming strength of the divine will as from plateau to plateau as of a mountain, it has to cross as in a ship the waters of existence, traverse its rivers overcome their deep pits and rapid currents; Its aim is to arrive at that far off ocean of light and infinity" (1).

Almost every pada of the Caryapadas gives this image of a journey or voyage. The image of the boat is frequently used.

"The boat of compassion is full of gold,
For silver there is no place
Kambali the poet rowing towards the sky
is gone,"

(Caryapada 8).

Again in another poem the poet Kannhu asks,

"Oh Dombi I ask your real nature
On whose boat oh Dombi do you come
and go."

(Caryapada 10).

There is frequent reference to the high place which is the goal of the journey and consequently there is the idea of ascent.

(1) *Secrets of the Vedas*—by Sree Aurobindo—Arya—

"High, high is the peak, where sits the
Sabari Maiden."

or (Caryapada 28).

"When the power of the nerves on high
seat is held

And the drum unstruck is giving forth
music in triumph

Kannhu the Kapali enters the way of the
world." (Caryapada 11).

The sky is also mentioned in many poems

"Kambali the poet rowing towards the sky
is gone."

or (Caryapada 8).

"From sky to sky raising the house with
the heart as axe." (Caryapada 50).

The sky is often synonymous with the Void

"When void with void is united

All regions are then apparent.
(Caryapada 44).

The body is regarded as the boat on which the sadhaka
crosses the waters of bhava or the world.

"The body a small boat, the mind the oar,

The excellent teacher's word the rudder."
(Caryapada 38).

The body is again described as the boat of the three
refuges, (saran) or a raft made by joining the three
planks, the refuges or planks standing for Kaya, Vak,
Citta. By the body must be understood the perfected
body or siddha deha, which only can be the means of
attaining the Sahaja Siddhi, or the perfection in Sahaj.
But the perfected body cannot itself reach the sadhaka to
his destination.

"Between the Ganges and Yamuna the
boat takes her course,

When it is drowning there Dombi enters and
 with her play crosses the boat over.
 Row on, row on, Dombi the way has
 become straight,
 By the blessings of the excellent teacher
 I shall go again to Jinpura."

(Caryapada 14)

We see from the above that the path is straight; the right path is also described as being without any obstructions and it is described as the path in which the eight siddhis or perfections are gained.

Oh foolish one the Void having no dissolution is not visible.

By proceeding along the right path one can gain the eight siddhis.

The right and left leave, Oh Santipad where straying you play,

On the landing place are no bushes, straw or grass with eyes closed proceed on the way."

(Caryapada 15).

The dangers in the way of the Sādhaka is often mentioned. The greatest danger for the sādḥaka lies in the two channels left and right of the right path called the Avadhūti. These are referred to as the two banks of which the Sādhaka must keep clear. They are said to be full of silt. They are creative of the world, and the channels through which birth and rebirth enter, which the sādḥaka of the Sahaja cult must avoid. Thus we have,

The world-river flows with deep and fierce motion,

There is no place on the two sides filled with silt. (Caryapada 5).

And again we are told,

"The three planks come together and Oh
the sound unstruck is produced with
great frequency.

Hearing this all the material spheres of Mara
the terrible (*samsar*) are disinte-
grated." (Caryapada 16).

The aim of the cult is the attainment of the state of
Sahaja and the enjoyment of Mahasukha. The latter is
enjoyed on the way to the former.

"The great joy by you on the way is
enjoyed."

The fact is if the right path is taken the path to Sahaj is
indeed a blissful path, for the Yogini or Divine Sakti that
helps the traveller to cross the waters of the world does
so indeed in play. It would be wrong to think of the
path of Sahaja to be an ascetic path.

And this brings us to the vexed question of the
woman partner in Sahaja Sadhana. M. M. Pundit
Haraprasad Sastri condemns the cult outright as one
aimed at the prolongation of carnal pleasure. Undoubt-
edly the cult, as it exists at present, is one which might be
so described. The control of breath and other hatha
yogic and sexoyogic practices do help in rejuvenating the
body and producing a happy state of mind but to consider
these as the aim of the sadhakas of the Sahaja cult with
whose songs we are dealing would indeed be unjust.
For the Sahaja Siddhais their sadhana was a very difficult
process in which the highest realisations were sought to
be attained. The hatha-yogic and sexo-yogic practices
were only the preliminary stage, means necessary for the
siddha-sarira or the perfected body which alone could
hold the downpour of Mahasukha, so that the physical
body of the sadhaka was transformed into the immortal
body of bliss without which the Sahaja state was
impossible. In fact it is in this body of bliss in which the

Sahaja sadhaka tastes the human play in the post Caitanya Sahaj song.

সহজ রূপেতে সহজ মানুষ
আখ্যানে মনুষ্য লীলা ।

"In Sahaja form the Sahaja man Tastes
the human play."

Both the Sufis and Christian mystics attained similar blissful states of rapture when the heart was divinely illumined. The Vaisnava mystics realised this same transformation through the Gopi-Bhava, in the perfected *adhara*, in which all the fifty-five and other qualities of the deity had play.

But though the Sahajias adopted Saktis for the purposes of *Sadhana*, these Saktis were often Yoginis with whom they united in the subtle body, when they had made some progress in the *sadhana*. When further progress had been made the *Sadhaka* could invoke *Avadhutika* or Sakti which lay coiled at the *mani-mul*. At the last stage the *sadhaka* had the power of invoking the transcendental Sakti who is invoked as *Dombi*. In the *Caryapadas* we find all forms of Sakti invoked. *Upaya* or means refers to all these four forms of Sakti. Sakti or *Upaya* was the means of carrying the *boddhi-citta* to the *Uswisa-Kamala*. The *Boddhi-citta* as explained by Dr. Sasibhusan Dasgupta is the bliss produced by the union of *Prajna* and *Upaya*, which in Sahaj practice meant the union of the female and male, or of the female and male organ signified by the lotus and the thunder or the *Bajra* and *Kamal*. This bliss through control of the vital winds was carried from the *Masi-mula* where it was produced to the *Uswisa-Kamala* where it was stilled in the form of Sahaja bliss, or *Mahasukha*, so that the body of the *sadhaka* was transformed into the immortal body which became *ajay*, without decay and *amr*, immortal.

Undoubtedly the aim of the Sahajiyās was to firmly establish themselves in the state of Sahaja, a state of immutable being which is Sahaja or Sahajata to all being. Actually it is a state of Being where all becoming has ceased. When the *sādhaka* in the recoil or reverse movement of yoga reaches this state "his body becomes firm as Bajra, it has no decay or destruction and the mind attains a state of equanimity." (*Kaulajñāna-Nirnaya* page 51). The state of Sahaj is described in *Kṛṣṇacārya's* *Dohakosa* thus, "The Nirvāṇa or Sahaj is a condition such as that of a sea without waves; unmuddied, clear, transparent. It is without sense of sin or virtue." The state of Sahaja is further thus described, "It is omniscient, omnipresent, and all good. All spiritual success lies in it. The mind on attaining it becomes immobile. The sound, form, touch, smell and all other perceptions merge into it. It is free from any positive or negative attributes, there is no production or destruction of attributes in it, and it is a state of perfect calm and the mind then attains its fulness." (*Akulavira Tantra* edited by Dr. Probodh Bagchi). In the same book the Sahaja state is further described as one in which the *sādhaka* feels, "He himself is the goddess, himself the god, the disciple, the preceptor, and he is at once the meditation, the man who meditates and the divinity (meditated upon)."

Such a high state of realisation cannot in any way be dismissed merely as carnal enjoyment. But we should not rush to the opposite extreme and think of the Sahajiyās as seekers of the highest Absolute. Rather they were mystics who valued their state of mystic rapture in which all sensuous perceptions were dissipated, the body itself trans-substantiated so that it became a vessel of the higher delight, and the mind was full of perfect calm and fulness. It would be equally a mistake to deny their *sexo-yogic* practices, and the nature of the *Sakti*

will always be misunderstood, unless we realise that these were, (1) a corporal partner who is the physical means of the *sādhana*, for the *Sahaja sādhana* it is the union of the *sādhaka* and his corporal *Sakti* in *maithuna* which awakens *Candali* or the yogic power whose seat is in the region of the navel, so that she is set ablaze and as her heat touches the house of *Dombi* at the *Usnisa-kamala*, *amṛta* or *soma* which is in the moon or *sasadhara* (*sahasrara*) pours down and not only quenches the fire of *Candali* which has dissipated the phenomenal world as the light of the moon dissipates the darkness, (so that the phenomenal world is perceived by the *sādhaka* as a magical illusion), but carries the *boddhi-citta* triumphantly to the *usnisa-kamala* where it unites with *Dombi* so that the final transformation in *Sahaja* takes place. (*Caryapadas Pada 30*) (2) The subtle partner, the *yoginis* who in the subtle body are available to the *sādhaka* for help in *sādhana*. According to *Kaulajñāna Nirṇaya* these *yoginis* may be classified as external (*bahista*) or internal (*adhyatma*) in which latter case they must be realised within the body. (3) the divine *Sakti* who appears at the navel as *Candali*, as the destroyer of the worlds and at the *Usnisa-kamala* as *Dombi*, *Sabari*, *Nairatma*, the beauteous *Sahaja* maiden, who is the means of the final transformation of the *sādhaka*.

The *Caryapadas* are songs of mystic practice and must be so taken. Any attempt to identify them with any philosophy, *madhyamika*, *Upanisadic* or otherwise too closely is bound to lead to difficulties in understanding the *padas*. That the philosophical terms taken from *Madhyamika* philosophy acquire in *Sahaja yana* a particular significance can be seen from the ease with which terms like *Kaya-Vak-Citta* of *Madhyamika* are transformed into *Rupa-raga-rati* in the post-Caitanya *Sahaja* cult taken from *Vaiṣṇava* rhetoric. Again *Dombi* appears in the

post-Caitanya Sahaj cult as "the true Rajak maiden" (swarupa Rajak nari).

We shall end our treatment of the Bauddha Sahaja Cult with one or two characteristic songs from the Caryapadas.

Pressing three nerves oh! Yogin fair,
 Me in your arms embrace and bear,
 The thunder and lotus with delight
 Rub and timeless make me quite.
 Kissing your lips in your arms I'll sink
 Lotus honey divinely drink.
 United with me though you lie
 You no bonds can touch or tie.
 At jewelled centre though you play
 In high trance absorbed you stay.
 Locked in the house the breath you still
 (With honey sweet the body fill)
 The sun and moon both halves destroy!
 (Yogin fair me convoy!)
 Of kundara yoga the conquest his
 The poet Kukkuri a hero is
 See in his body the sign appear
 Men and women him revere (1).

(Caryapada 4).

The three main yogic channels are under control and whilst maithuna goes on the Yogini or Sakti awakes and destroys the sense of duality which is produced by time. Whilst closely embracing the boddhicitta as she ascends from the Mani-mala she is absorbed in high samadhi at the sahasrara. The breath is suspended in kumbhaka, non-creation and creation, the sun and moon are both destroyed and Kukkuri the poet becomes master of the Kundara yoga and is known as such by the power of his signs or siddhis.

(1) This and other verse translations are free adaptations in verse of the Caryapadas. Candikam, and Rameyand by the author.

We give below another poem addressed to Dombi or the transcendental Sakti who descends from the Sahasrara and carries the Boddhicitta now the purified blissful consciousness to its goal. Dombi, whose nature is transcendent, may be distinguished from Yogini of the previous pada who is the Sakti at the Manimula and who having awakened makes the upward ascent carrying the Boddhicitta with it.

"Your hut from the city far removed,
Your passing touch how gracious proved,
Untouchable maid with you I'll dwell
In high joy none can tell,
For Kannhu a Kapali without disgust
Naked is shorn of all lust.
On a lotus merged with you,
Its three score four petals in view,
With you Dombi I see him dance,
The Perfect one in joyous trance.
Your nature true oh! maid reveal
Naught of yourself from me conceal.
On a boat you come and go
Whose is the boat oh! let me know.
Oh! sell your thread and basket too
And I'll renounce my box for you.
For you a Kapali, I nothing reck,
A garland of bones around my neck.
The stem you eat the banks you break
Killing, the I shall Dombi take.

Caryapada 10)

The hut or abode of Dombi whose nature is transcendent is far removed from the city, (the human body) but her passing touch as she comes and goes is felt by the Sadhaka. Kannhu the poet is determined to live with her and therefore he has become a naked Kapali, i.e. has shorn himself of all sense of duality which acts like a veil. He is also devoid of attraction and repulsion

He sees the sixty-four petals of the one lotus (at the sahasrara) and sees the Perfect One dancing with Dombi on it. The perfect One is the unqualified Increate with whom the sadhaka identifies himself. He then asks Dombi whose boat she comes and goes in for the boat is the blissful consciousness. Dombi is then requested to sell her thread and basket, which stands for the transcendental consciousness lit with the divine rays, and he will renounce his reed box, his consciousness limited by ahamkara. For the sake of Dombi he has become a Kapali wearing a necklace of bones. Dombi has broken the lake and eats the stem of the lotus, the channel of birth and death, and the sadhaka will now take her. (The last line is not very clear owing to inverted construction.)

Tantricism is the Sakti-cult in Bengali literature.

We have suggested that Tantricism owes its origin to the esoteric and erotic practices associated with Vedic mysticism. Agni the flaming strength of the Divine will became Sakti of Tantricism. Agni the male god became Sakti the female goddess as Vedic mysticism got contaminated by association with Mongolian tribes who from time to time invaded the plains of India from the north and north East, and from whose religion Tantricism inherited its demoniacal element and its worship of Saktis or female energies. The resurgence of Tantricism in Bengal, when the various yanas of Buddhist Tantricism were popularised, corresponds with the period when the powerful king of Tibet Srong-Tsen (who sent military assistance to the Chinese envoy Wang-hiuen-tse in his military exploits in India and who exercised suzerainty over Nepal) is said to have made extensive conquests in India. It is said that he conquered Assam and made himself master over half of India. (History of Bengal, edited by R. C. Majumdar, page 81) Tantric tradition

also supports the view that Tantricism in India owes its origin to Tibet (Mahācina) or the Nilachala or the blue mountains near Kamakshya. It is said that Vasista having failed to make Parvati appear to him through ascetic rites prepared to curse the Mahavidya Devi. Thereupon Kuleswari Mahavidya appeared to him and asked him to go to Mahācina and the country of the Bauddhas and always follow Atharva Veda. There seeing the Digambara Siddhais enjoying and making enjoy women he was shocked till the Buddha explained the nature of the sadhana. Another story of Vasista connects the origin of Tantricism with Kamakshya. It is said that the Devi appeared and asked him to go to Nilachala and worship Parameswari Devi at Kamakshya (Sakti and Sakta, Page 181-185).

That Tantricism not only affected mystic Vedicism but also the Saiva cult is apparent from the legends about Minanatha who is regarded as the Adi-guru or the first teacher of the Natha Cult which is a Saiva mystic cult. It is said that Minanatha went to Kadaligrāma (Kamakshya) at the bidding of the Devi and there got enamoured of the queens who ruled that land and was later rescued from there by his disciple Goraksanath. The description of the place and the supremacy of women in that place might suggest that it was a land where the matriarchal system prevailed, as well as that it was a centre of the Sakti cult. In Kaulajñānirnaya we are told that Matsyendranatha was born at Candradvipa where he attained his Siddhi and went later to Kamakshya. We might presume that here he associated the Saiva mystic hathayogic practices with esoteric and erotic practices associated with Sakti worship and became the founder of the Kaula school of Buddhist Tantricism, and was hailed as the founder of the Sahaja cult as well. The legends in connection with Minanatha or Matsyendranatha suggest that Saiva mysticism passed through a period of mixture

with the Sakti cult from which it saved itself and was able to retain its original yogic and ascetic nature.

There is some controversy whether Hindu Tantricism originated in Bauddha Tantricism. But Tantricism is a mystic cult and is neither Hindu nor Bauddha. In fact as we have pointed out in connection with the Sahaja cult the language used by the Tantrics took Hindu or Bauddha colouring according as it suited them. Whether the element of Tantric worship in the esoteric and erotic practices of Vedic mysticism was a later introduction or not it is difficult to say, but the ritual of crushing the soma leaves in the pestle and mortar, was interpreted in secret erotic rites as the act of maithuna. The symbol of the Siva-lingam and Gaupati resembling the pestle and mortar or sil-noda are even to-day indicative of this Vedic origin. The soma juice was the pleasurable sensation of maithuna which awakened the Kulakundalini the divine sakti dormant at the muladhara which rose when awake to the centre in the region of the navel (manimela). We have already mentioned that the Vedic Agni and the Tantric Sakti are identical in Tantric mystic rites. The navel-centre in dehatattva as we know is the seat of the element of fire. The next rite in the Vedic sacrifice is the rite of pravargya or the pravargya karma, (1) which consisted in pouring milk in the heated clarified butter contained in an earthenware vessel. The fact that this rite is regarded as an upacara seems to show that it was a later interpolation in the Vedic ritual. In esoteric practice Mahavira the earthen vessel is the human body in which Sakti has already been awakened, "the human body of great heroic mettle." Payas the milk is "the yield of the Cow of light," the amṛta or transcendental bliss which descends from the Sahasrara and sustains the body of the sadhaka when Sakti makes her upward journey which is

(1) A description of the rite is given by T. V. Kapali Sastri "Vedic Wisdom in the Vedanta—See Anubhūti Circle, 2nd number.

associated with the destruction of the phenomenal world. *Gharma* is "brilliant heat" and is kindred to *ghrita* or *ghrini* which means to shine, to burn. It is *Kalagni* or *Sakti* at the navel centre, which when aroused flames upward destroying all that is impure and base in fact the entire veil of duality, and ignorance (2).

The *Vidya* or knowledge from which the *pravargya* rite takes its origin is the *Madhu Vidya* which is associated with the son of *Atharvan*, *Dadhyan*. *Atharvan* belongs to the family of *Angirasas* who according to *Sree Aurobindo* are powers of light and flame who became humanised as the fathers of the race. (*Secrets of the Vedas—Arya*). The word *Atharva* according to *T. V. Kapali Sastri* (*Vedic wisdom in the Vedanta*) means fixed, not moving and so it is suggested by him that *Atharva* is the first or original flame power of *Agni* fixed in the human being generating *Dadhyan*, a particular manifestation of him, a flame power which moves on and progresses towards the higher levels. According to Vedic legend it is to *Dadhyan* that *Indra* reveals the *Madhu-Vidya* the knowledge of the *Madhu* or the *Delight* which sustains existence, so that he alone can open the stalls of the cows of light hidden by the *Panis*. Again it is with the bones of *Dadhyan* (the human body aflame with divine light) that *Indra* slays the *Vritras* the many-sided ignorance creative of the phenomenal world. *Madhu* in the external sense is the juice of the soma plant, which as we have signified in the esoteric and erotic sense is the delight arising from *Maithuna*. But *Madhu* or *Soma* has also a mystic significance, in which it is the delight which sustains and supports existence, the delight from which creation arises and into which it merges. It is therefore also the *Amṛta*, the wine of immortality which the gods drink and which sustains the *sadhaka* when he has

(2) In this connection we may refer to the interpretation of Woodruff of the Seven-ton good *Agni* is *Sakti* and *Sakta*.

attained the mystic union and been triumphantly carried to his goal. We have seen in the songs of the Sahajiyas that the delight which comes from the union of Vajra-kamal (maithuna) is the boddhicitta, but it is the impure boddhi-citta, which must be purified of samsar, this chain of coming and going, and be carried by Dombi the transcendental bliss to the Sahaja cakra, where it remains in the Sahaja state. In the Vedas, which like the Sahaja songs are songs of mystic practice we have many songs which give detailed description of the washing, crushing, pressing and straining, of the soma juice. To those initiated in the mystic practices of Vedic sadhana these songs must have had an esoteric significance and taught the sadhaka to transform the delight of Maithuna into the mystic soma, the sustaining delight of existence. The description of the strainer or sieve definitely makes it impossible that the sieve should only refer to the physical instrument through which the juice of the soma leaves passes.

"Wide spread out for thee is the sieve of thy purifying. O master of the soul becoming in the creature, thou pervadest his members all through. He tastes not that delight who is unripe, and whose body has not suffered in the heat of the fire; they alone are prepared who have been prepared by the flame." (*Rg-Veda* ix, 83).

The hymn addresses to Soma, who is addressed as the master of the soul, (because soma the delight of existence is the essence of the soul), and who in the creature the Jiva is the becoming. Soma is said to pervade all the members of the body of the sadhaka, but only of him whose body is ripe having suffered the heat of the fire, those who have been prepared by the flames. We have already seen how in the Tantra this heat is created by the awakening of the Sakti, the flaming strength of the divine will. Again the sieve is thus described, "the strainer through which the heat of him who is purified is spread

out in the seat of heaven; its threads shine out and stand extended." Is not the seat the highest heaven, just as the earthen vessel is the body of the sadhaka, and the threads that stand extended and shine out are undoubtedly the yogic channels through which, "the heat of him," the sakti or powerful will of man, the fire of tapas, or the joy of existence still impure is purified?

We have said enough to show that there is a close resemblance between the Vedic mystic practises and the Tantric mystic practices. But it must be clearly understood that mystic practices form only a small portion of Vedic knowledge. It is only the introductory knowledge upon which alone the higher knowledge can be founded which is collected from the Vedic hymns and systematised in the Upanishads. We should not therefore take the Sahaja state sought to be reached by the Sahajiyas or the laya of the Hindu Tantras as realisation of the highest Absolute. We know that after Sree Ramkrishna had attained Tantric Siddhi under the direction of Bhairabi he was initiated by Totapuri in to the Turiya samadhi which is union with the Absolute consciousness. We have already seen that the state of Sahaja was a state in which the thinking and reasoning mind becomes immobile, all dualistic knowledge disappears and the Sadhaka enters the blissful equilibrium whose nature is Mahasukha. Poised in this equilibrium the sadhaka goes about his daily duties. The Tantric laya too is a similar state of equilibrium in which there is a similar disappearance of dualistic knowledge i.e., of enjoyer and enjoyed, and the sadhaka becomes identical with the object of worship. Thus the Sadhaka prays in the Tantratattva, "By thy mercy bring about the dissolution of my world in these twin aspects of thyself, Sakti and Sakta..... With the collyrium paint of wisdom grant glorious vision to the eyes of thy son blind from birth. Grant me that wheresoever I may twin them whether on earth, the waters or in

space, thy beauteous form may make me forgetful of the appearance of the world." We can also see that there is no place for mayavada in the Tantras, for *Maya* is an attribute of the Divine Sakti. The following prayer testifies this, "Thou alone in the two aspects of Sakti and Sakta are the nourisher of both Agama and Nigama..... So I say Mother That the Nigama and the Agama (Creation and Non-creation) which are in Thee will never be destroyed! But destroy for once O Mother the Nigama and the Agama (the going out and the coming) which are in me."

Though in Sahaja, Maithuna whether in the physical or subtle body was essential for the awakening of Sakti (called Candali in the Sahaja songs), in the Tantras the alternative method of *Dhyana* or meditation could be adopted. Through the vicarious method of meditation on the union of Siva and Sakti with which the *sadhakas* identified themselves, joyous vibrations corresponding to the joy of actual maithuna were created in the *sadhaka's* body which aroused the *Kulakundalini Sakti*. The number of Buddhist Tantric gods and goddesses whose images we find in close embrace seems to indicate that such meditation was also a part of the Buddhist Tantras. The method through which the *sadhaka* identified himself with Sakti was through *Ahamkara* which is the conception of *sadhaka* that he is the deity. "I am the goddess and the goddess is in me." Thus in the *Mahamirvana Tantra* we have, "The initiate having purified the *bhutas* should think of himself as the *Devi*." The *sadhaka* having thus identified his own *iccha-sakti* with the *Devi*, who is the divine *Ichha-Sakti* or the Divine Will (to manifest), is borne up by the *Devi* in the return movement as when the Will to manifest is withdrawn into the Unmanifest One-ness, destroying all the *bhutas* and all duality the *Sadhaka* is able to make the ascent into the Unmanifest. In the Hindu Tantras the relation between the *Devi* and

the *sadhaka* was that of the Mother and child, but in all hymns previous to *Ramprosad* the devotional rather than the emotional tone is paramount.

We have already stated that we have chosen to illustrate Tantric mysticism through the songs of *Ramprosad* because in these songs the emotion of mystical extacy in the Tantras has reached its highest expression. There is scarcely an aspect of Tantric mysticism with which the songs of *Ramprosad* do not deal. The songs on the Advent of the Mother are amongst the most beautiful songs of the Bengali language, full of mystic significance as they are.

" Rhythmic, swaying, who comes there
 Drunk with wine with streaming hair
 A maid quick-stepping goes to war
 To crush dark forces ever more,
 These she holds in her hands
 The ' Bishop ' (1) devours with gesture
 grand.

As wonderous on blue-watered lake
 The crimson flowers in blossom break,
 See her body mystic dark
 Blood-sprinkled as with sacred mark.
 On her face a lotus blue
 The crescent moon is born anew.
 Who this sapphire jewel fine
 Who darkness rends with nails that shine.
 See, she comes like lightening rash
 With her sparkling beauty's flash;
 Deep the thunder's rumbling sound
 From end to end the skies resound.
 The sons of Diti, pale depart,
 As they quake with trembling heart.
 Mother your anger oh forswear!

(1) The elephant dice in Indian dice-playing, the Bishop in Western dice.

To your sphere return is the poet's prayer.

The poem describes the awakening of Sakti in the poet. Sakti appears as the mystic darkness, which in truth is the dazzling effulgence which is too bright for mortal eyes and so appears dark. Sakti as she uncoils herself (for she has lain coiled at the Muladhara, appears beautifully swaying with the spiral movement of a snake uncoiling herself. She awakes drunk with the wine of the joy of existence (which is of the nature of the joy of maithuna). She destroys the danavas (forces of darkness) and the bhutas (elements) which are their abode, as well as the Bishop (dice) or elephant (dice) which is ignorance herself. She appears to the poet besprinkled with blood, as she emerges from the light, and the Crimson blood-spots appear as victorious decorations. To the poet's eye now able to bear the dazzling light of truth, Sakti appears as a streak of lightning, and as she ascends there is the thunderous sound of the shattering of the bhutas or elements and the sons of Diti (duality) tremble and quake. As there is danger of total extinction, and death of the sadhaka Ramprasad prays to her to ascend to her own sphere, the Sahasrara, and be withdrawn into Siva (the blissful equilibrium) from whom she has emerged.

The contribution of Ramprasad to Sakta mystic poetry is the note of deep and intimate love which he introduces into Sakta mystic songs which were previously full of the note of awe and devotion. Ramprasad has introduced a new *rasa* (emotional mode) into Bengali poetry which is the love of the child for the mother with all its emotional nuances. The love of the mother for the child which is seen in Yasoda's love for the child Kṛṣṇa and the love of Haimavati for her child Uma, had been previously treated in poetry but the child's love for the mother (*sisu-bhava*) had never before been treated in Bengali poetry. To Ramprasad therefore Rabindranath

is indebted for his charming poems in *Sisu* which are written in the same emotional mode. We have no doubt that the transformation of the Bengali language which was immensely sweetened and emotionalised by the post-Caitanya Padavali poetry is responsible for the turn which Sakta poetry has taken in *Ramprosād*. Though it is difficult to transfer into the English language the simple sweetness of the complaint of the child slighted by his mother, we give below one of these poems.

“ Gracious, who calls you Mother, fie!
 For to me with green leaves you rice deny,
 Whilst others milk and sugar taste
 Luxurious, rich your substance waste.
 Are they dear mother your father's father
 That their's are the mansions that I'd have
 rather.
 And am I to you none of kin?
 Oh! tell me then what is my sin?
 Have I raked up your paddy ripe
 That my fate is of this type?
 To see me suffer thus deserted
 To a granite image are you converted.

The sentiment in these poems may be compared to *Radhika's Man*, in which she shrinks from *Sree Kṛṣṇa* because of his imagined neglect of her. It is the mood of the *sādhaka* when his ego or *ahamkāra* comes between himself and the Deity. In *Vaiṣṇava* poetry it is a mere play to intensify the love. We shall end our treatment of the songs of Tantric mysticism with a famous song of *Ramprosād* in which under guise of an agricultural simile instruction in Tantric mystical practice is given. Thus we see that from the *Vedas* to *Ramprosād* the same practice of veiling the meaning under images that in themselves often convey a more superficial sense, is resorted to.

" Know you not, oh! mind, to till the land
 That sullen, idle thus you stand,
 See, barren lies the human field
 Which tilled will golden harvest yield.
 With the Mother's name make you fence
 Then none may steal the harvest thence;
 For strong the fence of her streaming hair
 Death himself will come not there.
 Lest others forfeit, alienate,
 Make strong your claim and cultivate.
 The more you sow, you'll reap the more
 The paddy cut, how rich the store.
 Your teacher see! the seed has sown
 With your devotion the plant has grown,
 If alone you cannot reap,
 Prasād will help to stack and heap.

The poet in this poem wishes to instruct the initiate in the art of Deha-tattva. The human body is the fertile soil lying barren that must be cultivated, and made to yield a golden spiritual harvest. The streaming hair of the Mother are the extended psychic channels in the body of the sadhaka which must be filled with the nectar or wine of immortality which flows from the sahasrara in the form of the joy of pure existence, when Sakti is awake and ascends to the sahasrara to unite with Siva. Death cannot then come near the sadhaka, but he must be sedulous in his cultivation of Dehatattva if the forces of duality and ignorance are not to win the field from him and make it their home. The harvest is the pure bliss of being and the higher knowledge, in which the Sadhaka and the object of Sadhana are merged in one and the sadhaka realises himself as one with the Deity.

Vaishnavism and Bengali literature.

The term Vaishnavism is itself indicative of its connection with Visnu first mentioned in the Vedas. See

Aurobindo tells us in his *Secrets of the Vedas* that because *Visnu's* name is less often mentioned than those of *Ind* the Illumined Intellect, or *Agni* the Flaming Strength the Divine Will, or *Soma* the Lord of the Delight Existence, it is not due to his lesser importance. Actual the Vedic hymns being songs sung at the time of the Sacrifice, lay more stress on the means than the goal, for the sadhaka advances towards his goal by the light of the illumined intellect, the strength of the divine will and maintained and nourished in the arduous toil by the delight of existence which is the substratum both of the world of Being and the world of Becoming. The conception of *Visnu* in the Vedas is thus summed up by Sri Aurobindo, " *Visnu* is the All-Pervading, the Cosmic Deity, the Lover and Friend of our souls, the Lord of the transcendent existence and the transcendent delight." (*Secrets of the Vedas—Arya*). The Vedas mention the three strides of *Vishnu*, " O *Vishnu* now I declare thy works, who has measured out the earthly worlds, the two polar extremes of earth and heaven (swar) and that higher seat of our self-accomplishing (the triple principles, *tridhatu*, beyond heaven and super-imposed upon it as its highest level, the last stride and the supreme seat of *Vishnu*) he supports, he the wide moving in the threefold steps of his universal movement." We are told that these three steps are full of honey wine. " He whose three steps are full of honey wine and they perish not but have extacy by the self-harmony of their own nature; he being One holds the triple principles and earth and heaven also, even all the worlds " (1).

Thus we get here not only the all-pervasive emanation of *Visnu* through his three strides, but also the nature of this emanation which is honey wine, i.e., *ananda* or delight, through which he supports the world of *Brahma's*

(1) Hymn to *Vishnu* (*Rigveda*) Translated by Sri Aurobindo in the *Secrets of the Vedas (Arya)*.

making. Being the resident of the higher seat of the sadhaka's self-accomplishing, that world of Being to which the world of Becoming must advance the prayer of our Vedic fore-fathers goes up, " Let our strength and our thought (power purified and thought illumined) go up to Visnu the All-Pervading, the wide moving Bull (for it is he " who enjoys and fertilises all the energies of force and all the trooping herds of thought), whose dwelling place is the mountain, he who being One has measured all his long and far extending seat of our self-accomplishing by only three of his strides " (1). And again the prayer goes up " May I attain to and enjoy the goal of the movement, the Delight where souls that seek the godhead have the rapture; for there in the highest step of the wide-moving Visnu is the friend of men who is the fount of the sweetness. Those are the dwelling place of the twain we desire as the goal of our journey where the many-horned herds of light go travelling; the highest step of wide moving Visnu shines down on us here in the manifold vastness.

The goal of the movement or the ascension, is clearly stated here as rapture. Visnu here is also called the friend of man, as except through the sustenance of his delight, man could not survive in the upward movement, nor could the three worlds survive. It is here too that are the two, (Iswar and Iswar-Sakti) and the many-horned cattle of Visnu.

But though in the Vedas a very high place is given to Visnu he can by no means be said to occupy a place of supremacy over the other gods. As in the case of others his function is clearly given. In the later Vedic period, that of the Brahmanas, he occupies a more prominent position. He is even said to occupy the highest position amongst the gods. He joins Indra in

(1) Hymn to Visnu translated by Srie Anubindo from the Rig-Veda in the secrets of the Vedas. (Arya).

turning the Asuras, (the unregenerated *ahamkara* or ego) out. (Ait Br.). But still the fact remains that nowhere in Vedic literature is he given the position of Supreme God. Besides the question rises from whence came the doctrine of Bhakti and the idea of the God of grace which we get in later Vaishnavism? We know that the sacrificer prayed to Visnu to make good the defects of the sacrifice, which can be taken as a prayer for intercession of divine grace, and in the sacrifice itself we get the image of total surrender, but here we have only the germs of the later Vaishnavism, and we must seek elsewhere for its fuller development. It appears that the Visnu concept of the Vedas at some time merged with the Bhagvata, Satvata, Ekantika or Pancharatra religion, which is referred in the Narayaniya section of the Mahabharata and which is said to have been obtained from Narayana himself by Narada. It is also said to have been concisely told in the Harigita (Bhagvad Gita). But as neither the date of the Bhagvad Gita nor the Narayaniya are certain we can only gather the age of this religion from certain epigraphic records. The Besanger Inscription (1) of the second century B.C. mentions the erection of a flag staff with the image of Gauruda at the top in honour of Vasudeva by Heliodora the ambassador of the Greek king Antialkides who was a Bhagavata. The Ghasundi (2) inscription engraved a little earlier speaks of a Pujah stone wall in honour of Sankarshana Vasudeva. Another inscription of the first century B.C. at Nanaghata (3) contains an adoration of Sankarshana Vasudeva. From these epigraphic records we see that the Bhagvatas were devotees of Vasudeva. But there is little authentic evidence about Vasudeva round whom the Bhagavata religion centred. The name occurs in the Taittiriya Aranyaka (tenth Prapathaka) where it is a name of Visnu. But if we take the Bhagvad-

(1) Luders Ins. No. 669 (Epigraphia Indica—Vol. X).

(2) Ditto No. 6.

(3) Ditto No. 1112.

A DOSE OF GANDHISM

No man within the past several centuries has been so universally loved and esteemed while alive and no death has been so deeply and widely mourned as that of Mahatma Gandhi. Every word he said, every idea he thought and every deed he performed was received with utmost reverence throughout the world. Leaders of thought there have been many who have enriched the store of human knowledge, lovers of man there have been many also who have shed many a tear for the sorrows of mankind. Giants of action also have been known who have flung themselves like thunder-storm upon the face of the earth changing its look with their deeds of heroism. Gandhiji was in himself the noblest example of a perfect embodiment of what is highest and best in human thought, feeling and action.

Mahatma Gandhi had the wisdom of the ancients in looking upon the things of the world with the eye of the spirit as distinguished from the modern way of looking upon the things of the spirit with the eye of the flesh. Gandhiji possessed the vision of seers to realise the true truth of the universe and firmly believed in the reality of the supreme spirit whose imperfect and fragmentary manifestation the world process is. Religion according to Gandhian conception therefore seeks to bind together the hearts of men to one another and to God. The purpose of religious faith is the realisation of the self in all as the God in all and the consequent service of men and creatures is the perfection and completion of religious life. It is in essence an inspiration which impels the individual to drown his egoistic self in the life of universal spirit in which all barriers of caste and creed, sex and culture, sects and nations sink. It is all-comprehending and all-

encompassing in meaning and all-sweeping and all-embracing in expression.

Viewing religion in this spiritual and universal sense, Gandhiji saw clearly that all religions are in essence the same; they differ only in outward appearance or forms. Creeds may vary but the seed of religion is always the same. God is Truth or better Truth, to Gandhiji is God. There can therefore be no such thing as Hindu Truth or Muslim Truth, Christian Truth or Buddhist Truth. True religion therefore is inconsistent with the ill-conceived bigotry of exclusive faiths. Religion unites man to man, nay it unifies mankind. But unfortunately it has been perverted into a force of disunity and discord by the so-called leaders or propagandists of religion. God is one although the paths may be many. All religions are true to Gandhiji. So he says, "Is the God of the Moham-medan different from the God of the Hindus? Religions are different roads converging to the same point. What does it matter that we take different roads so long as we reach the same goal?" This spirit of universalism is the soul of the teachings of all men of God.

Sree Krishna says in the Gita:—

"The roads men follow—they all lead to me

At last; though some are thorny and some fair "

According to Sanker:—

"The soul has no caste, neither any creed

It is one with the universal life "

Mohammed also is said to hold:—

"There are as many roads to God as souls."

According to Sufism:—

"Persian or Turk or Arab are not known,

Or Hindu, Christian or Muslim to the soul;

Wisdom and virtuous deed make the soul's life,

Not racial names and not communal strife."

Gandhiji was accordingly a firm believer in the fundamental unity of all Faiths. To him the different

scriptures were equally sacred. He would read them alternately during his prayer with equal reverence. The scriptures contain revelations of the same truth and could not but be helpful to one another. Gandhiji was thus a staunch advocate of the Fellowship Of Faiths. Men at bottom have a common human nature and God is the same for all. How can there be any meaning in our religious and communal conflicts. In fact, the best and surest remedy for communal strifes lies in exploring the common ground of all religions and propagating the spirit of unity underlying all religions. The charge is laid at the door of religion that it has been often the source of great conflict and discord. The history of humanity in deed contains dark chapters of the most terrific and brutal conflicts in the name of religion. Men have indulged in orgies of murder and loot and the most shameful tortures on women and children in the name of religion. These are cruel facts and constitute the gravest slur on religion. But there can be little doubt that these are the outcome of foolish ignorance and ill-begotten religious arrogance.

There are three stages in religious life namely:— Tribal, Creedal and Cultural. In the early stage of human mind, men are content to represent God in numerous fantastic forms and engaged themselves in mass-worship in fanciful ways to suit the taste and temper of different tribes. Soon there emerge mighty figures of supermen who claim special inspiration from the Deity and enunciate dogmas and doctrines to bind their followers with iron chains of customs and creeds. Egoism reigns supreme in the minds of the authors of creeds and give rise to factional spirit. The spirit of domination and exclusion results in fanaticism and is the root of conflicts and feuds. But the religious spirit soon outgrows its egoistic errors and makes it self-discovery. It soon realises that many of the doctrines customarily accepted

as the fundamental basis of men's creeds do not stand the scrutiny of science. Religion can not be a nest of unscientific opinions. It must not be in contradiction with the teachings of science. For example, modern science has disproved creation and established evolution. If, to be religious, one has to accept the theory of creation, reason has to be sacrificed at the altar of blind faith. Cultural religion discards this attitude of blind adherence to uninformed dogmas and has the courage to be scientific.

Religious differences are in fact more apparent than real. Diversity does not disprove unity but only illustrates it. Cows may be of different colour and size but the milk they give is always white. How can there be religions without a common spirit of religion? In fact differences can have no meaning without a background of resemblance.

Every religion seeks purification of the soul and aims at emancipation from the bondage of the flesh. The individual self seeks to transcend its individuality and attain universality. The *Jiva* is to become *Shiva*. The *Khudi* is to become *Khoda*. "Love God with all thy heart and love thy neighbour as thyself" is the central truth of all religions.

The narrow spirit of egoism is the very negation of religion. There can be no place for 'I' ness and mineness in religion. Since my God is the common God of all, the different religions constitute a noble fraternity engaged in the pious pursuit a common goal. There is no sense in saying that my religion is the best. Assertiveness and intolerance are the product of ignorance. Gandhiji was the best and noblest example of religious toleration. He said 'the golden rule of conduct is mutual toleration, seeing that we will never all think alike and shall always see truth in fragments and from different angles of vision.'

Gandhiji's prayers testify to the spirit of broad-

mindful toleration and prove him to be the staunchest advocate of the fellowship of faiths. He took the risk of offending the orthodox elements of different creeds. Preachers there might have been of the doctrine of fellowship from high platforms; but few could stick to it at the risk of life. So deep was his faith in fellowship that he made it his life's mission to proclaim this even to the masses at the risk of popularity. In this, he found hope of life and joy for mankind and without it, all, would he feared rightly, lead to pain and death.

Jesus Christ said, "The kingdom of heaven is within and not without." It is within the soul and not within the realm of observation. Gandhiji went one step forward and thought "As within, so without." If the kingdom of heaven is a reality and not a dream of theologians it must be realisable within the course of human history. Man was made in the image of God. The perfections which are in God can be progressively manifested on the plane of the earth if only we, men accept the law of God which is no other than the law of love. If God is truth it follows that unity is the fundamental fact of this world and whatever works for separateness and difference can have no more than temporary or apparent reality. The universal life can from its very nature admit of no real breach. It must be all-embracing. There may be grades or degrees of its manifestation; but there can be no exclusion. It is love which can hold together many into one, plurality into unity. Everything is true in so far as it shares in the life of the universal being.

The law of our being also contains within it the promise of our well being. If the universe be at bottom one the different members or elements of this unity must live in harmony with the spirit of unity. In other words, we live as we love. The very idea of harm to others is irrelevant. Harmlessness or non-violence is the funda-

mental requirement or duty of man. Truth and love or Ahimsa thus are the two pivots on which the whole philosophy of Gandhiji turns. The one teaches us to be at one with the life of the universe and the other prompts us to embrace one another in love. Love of God also implies love of our fellow men. So strong is Gandhiji's faith in these two fundamental principles which lie at the basis of all philosophy and religion that he often declared that if there was to be a choice between freedom and non-violence he would unhesitatingly prefer the latter. To him social and political freedom are only the expressions of the essential and spiritual freedom of man. External freedom without internal freedom is to him a mirage.

The freedom of any individual or nation to be real must be consistent with the freedom of others. Freedom therefore is inconsistent with the idea of domination. When a nation keeps another in bondage by sheer force it is not itself free. It is subject to lust for power or pleasure and is thus itself in bondage. Gandhiji would replace lust by love, vanity by humility, vices by virtue, license by restraint, competition by co-operation. His conception of freedom is essentially spiritual in nature. Freedom is realisable only through self-conquest. The path of self-indulgence or Pravritti is ruinous. The true path is that of Nivritti or self-purification. The true path is not that of violence or force it is that of non-violence or love.

It is obvious that the realisation of such an ideal in worldly affairs requires a thorough re-construction of the socio-political structure of the collective life of the society on the basis of the spiritual freedom of man. Self-purification is the very basis of his scheme of re-constructed society. A life of peace and contentment and devotion to the higher aims of existence is to be desired. Accumulation of wealth and power in the hands of a greedy

few is a sign of social distemper. And as mills and factories by using machine augment man's greed, they should be replaced by cottage industries. Villages and not cities should be the real centre of life and action. Our attention should be diverted from the outward glamour of modern life and fixed upon the inner varieties of existence. Equality of man, regardless of the distinctions of caste, sex or creed should be emphasised. Science should cry halt to its mad quest for man's power and pleasure and should devote itself to the pursuit of peace, progress and perfection. Organisations for war should be replaced by organisations for peace. All thought of world-war should give place to a pious devotion to world-peace.

Lofty as the principles of his faith were, Gandhiji was by nature and nurture the simplest and loveliest of men. There was no touch of any rigid austerity which characterises a religious or philosophic temperament. There was nothing like exclusiveness about him. His was the gentlest, the loveliest of characters. He was simplicity itself. A transparent sincerity was markedly present in him always. There was no secrecy in his dealings. Abstemious in eating and drinking, regulated in sleeping and waking he led the disciplined life of an Indian hermit. Free from anger, greed and fear he found joy in seeking the good of all. He exemplified in himself the marks of wisdom as laid down by an oriental sage by being straight forward yet mild, gentle yet dignified; strong but untyrannical; energetic but not arrogant; tolerant yet stern; mild yet firm; complacent but reverent; incisive yet considerate; docile yet daring; resolute yet sincere; courageous but just. To know him was to love him and also to revere him. Humility was to Gandhiji the root of honour. To him, as to the saint of Jerusalem, lowliness was the foundation of loftiness. In a manner he was the world's softest and the world's hardest man. The

extremes met in him. He was the meekest and yet strongest of men. He was a true lover of the poor and yet a friend and guide to the rich. He was the supreme leader of the Hindus and yet a staunch friend of the Muslims. He received the wildest of abuse with a smile. When the tragic shot came he welcomed it with his serene calm. With a heavenly smile he muttered the holy name of the Lord, blessing the man that killed him.

In a vein of scepticism, men sometimes wonder what could be God's motive in having Gandhiji the man of God killed. Theologians not only proclaimed the being of God but also profess His wisdom and benevolence in all that happens. Even in ugly deeds of pain, they see signs of design. No stone can fall without His will; no hair can waive without His wish. Why then Gandhiji, the beloved of God and men alike should fall a victim to assassin's fire as did Jesus on the cross? Some would warn us not to be over-inquisitive about God's motives. Some would refer to the law of Karma, which operates with inexorable rigour through previous births. Some again seek comfort in the thought that death is a loss to the physical eye only; but to deeper vision it means only a transfer from one station to another according to desert. As said Ramkrishna Paramhansa death is only a shifting from one room to another. There was a school under the wise control of a Rector. He appointed a learned scholar to teach english to the lower classes of the school. The new teacher poured out the wealth of his learning to his unappreciative audience, who admired but could not follow him. The Rector took notice of this anomaly and shifted him to a higher class which was better fitted to appreciate him. Gandhiji was apparently wasting his divine energy in vain attempts to change the heart of sinful men from vice to virtue, from lust to love, from violence to non-violence. The world-stage was however not fit for that mission. So the stage-master called away

Gandhiji from off this scene to engage him in a higher plane of work. It is futile to think that Gandhiji's death was an accidental affair. It is significant and ominous. It is a presage and premonition of the impending catastrophe that is soon to overtake this sinful world.

There is a horse and a rider. The rider may be led by the horse and soon run into a ditch. The horse on the contrary may be led by the rider and reach the desired goal of the journey. Modern civilisation has placed all emphasis on the body and its interests, its power and pleasure and is driving the world fast to ruin. It has placed itself under the guidance of science. Science is a powerful engine. It has tremendous dash and spectacular speed. It marches on its way heedless of the voice of conscience, regardless of the counsels of reason, eyeless to the vision of religion, widening the scope of man's physical power and enjoyment. Science by its conquest of outer nature has enriched us no doubt with material wealth. It has enamoured our senses with rich display of material possession and enlarged the field of sense enjoyment beyond the range of ancient thought. But has not the price paid for such scientific achievement been too great for man? In conquering Nature he has himself been conquered. The modern man has surrendered himself to Nature. His dominion over Nature has meant to him the loss of the dominion over his inner Nature. In obtaining mastery over the world he has lost his birth-right of inner mastery over his ownself. His outward victory has been the cause of his inward defeat. He has lost his self-mastery, self-possession and self-control which is the real key to the boundless joys of spiritual wealth, the source of real peace and happiness. Science has to-day opened our eyes to the splendours of the outer world but has blinded us to the vision of inner truth. We are anxious to-day to make a living but we do not know how to build a true life.

Does man belong to nature or does he belong to God? This question was asked again and again by the great seers and sages of the East and this question was revived in our times by Mahatma Gandhi. We may think of our body only and the world outside as the primary reals and subordinate the interests revealed to the higher consciousness to the lower. You will then be degrading yourself to the level of brutes. As comrades of brutes you will cherish brutal lusts, aim at brutal power and work for brutal ends. Your intelligence, your reason and your conscience then are only the accidental products of animal experiences. Matter, they say makes mind; so let mind remain in the service of matter. The soul has no existence and mind is made to serve the body. This bondage is the root of selfishness, egoism, greed, pride and enmity or *Himsa*. It opens the road to competition and conflict and is sure to lead to chaos and ruin. The glamour of science should not delude us. Let man be true to his inner nature and his spiritual birth-right. Let him build his culture and civilisation on the rocky foundation of truth and save mankind from the fear of endless pain and pitiless ruin. This was the message which Gandhiji proclaimed to the war-oppressed and sorrow-stricken humanity. Who is there to heed to his voice? Who will cry halt to the mad drama of world-destruction?

Is religion disproved by science? Many men of modern light are inclined to think so. Reality must be sensuous. It must be known through sense perception. Whatever is beyond the sense is *if so facto* unreal. The conception of God and immortal soul and Eternity are mere fictions of imagination. No body should waste his time and energy in the pursuit of a false mirage. So modern thinkers seek to build or re-build the whole structure of civilisation and culture, re-construct society and politics on the basis of the objective facts obtained by

pure observation and reason. But modern scientists are beginning to realise that one can not perceive without knowing that he perceives and that perception implies knowledge of perception as such. The fragments of knowledge as parts must presuppose a whole of knowledge. The changes appearing in space and time imply and presuppose an Eternal order of reality which is manifesting itself in varying degrees of clearness. There can be no room for dogmatism or scepticism. Reality is what science seeks but such reality even according to the science's own admission must be knowable. Knowability is the pre-supposition of reality. Otherwise the very quest of knowledge will lead us to a fool's paradise. The pre-supposition of universal reality thus must be universal knowledge. *Sattwam, Jnanam, Anantam*. Science thus in admitting an epistemological basis is knocking at the door of Philosophy.

Religion, according to Gandhiji, is the pursuit or worship of Truth. Truth has a sensuous or particular aspect which is revealed to sense perception. It has a deeper, universal, and supersensuous aspect which is not grasped by physical vision but is the truth of man's spiritual vision. The so-called contradiction between science and religion thus is more apparent than real. In fact science is religion made overt and religion is science made covert. The wise men and seers of all times and places have affirmed the truth of their spiritual vision and proclaimed that man is not an animal only but belongs to the spiritual order of beings. It is a suicidal folly on the part of man to deny the truth of his own nature and the world. 'The fool hath said in his own heart that there is no God' says the Bible. The universe is at bottom one. Reality is at bottom spiritual and only outwardly material. Matter is not the prius of spirit but spirit is the prius of matter. Man's duty then is to live in harmony with the supreme truth of the universe and

look upon others as his brothers. In other words, as Gandhiji has taught truth and non-violence (Satyam and Ahimsa) should be the guiding principles of our life.

Man's fleshly nature has made him subject to two great evils against which all religions have unanimously sounded a note of warning. He must guard against lust and hate. The Gita says, "Kama esha krodha esha

Bidhi enam iha vairinam." The same truth is borne out by sufism when it says;

"Hatred and lust are the two inner foes,
They twist man's eyes and make his visions false,
And from the straight path lead the soul astray."

These two evils are rooted in *Abidya* or egoism or *Ahankara*, which manifests itself in three primary instincts or desires. According to Hindu philosophy they are called *Syam* or self-preservation (May I always be); *Bahusyam* or self-expansion (May I be more); *Bahudhasyam* or self-multiplication (May I be many). Buddhism mentions these primary instincts as *Bhava trishna*, *Vibhava trishna*, *Kama trishna* which according to sufism are equivalent to the three desires for *Zamin* (land, food and self-preservation), *Zar* (wealth) and *Zan* (wife). In modern psycho-Analytic science, we hear of these in the form of (1) ego-complex (2) property-complex and (3) Sex-complex.

Just as *Ahankara* is the root of all selfishness or vice, *Nirahankara* or selflessness is the root of all altruistic virtues. By the process of self-purification the primary desires are transformed into three higher virtues in a corresponding manner. Self-love is transformed into love of others which means *Ahimsa* or harmlessness or non-violence. Love of wealth is transformed into Non-proprietaryship-*Aparigraha*. Love of women is transformed into continence or *Brahmacharya*.

The human self at first propelled by its egoistic impulse seeks expansion through the satisfaction of its primary lusts. In course of time it becomes conscious of its errors, grows weary of its mad wanderings in a foreign environment and begins its return journey homeward, heavenward or Godward, in the hope of rest, peace and bliss. It sings to itself:—

“ Man chala nija niketane,
 Sansara bideshe bideshira beshe,
 Bhrama kena akarane.”

(Mind, go back to your own home (which is heaven). What use is there for wandering vainly in the foreign lands in the guise of a foreigner?)

This Godward journey of the human soul is the meaning of religion. True religion is not so much an affair of external demonstration through wordy expression or through ceremonial functions. It essentially consists in the inward functions or spiritual efforts of self-regulation. It is based on self-purification or self-discipline. So according to *Raja yoga* a man of religion has to observe the following “ Ahinsa, Sattam, Astayam Sou-cleanliness, restrain of senses from all wrong ways. These constitute the doorway to the life of the spirit. It is clear that Gandhiji in preaching truth and non-violence was placing his feet upon the very foundation of our spiritual life.

It is equally evident that Gandhiji was not bound by any creed or dogma of any religion. His religion was an ‘open religion,’ broad and free, pure and serene, joyous and harmonious. It was the religion of the heart—a religion of love which assimilates as well as discriminates, rejects as well as selects, denies and also affirms. “ All religions ” says, Gandhiji, “ are true. All religions have some errors in them.” He also declares, “ All religions are dear to me as my own Hinduism. My veneration for other faiths is the same as for my own faith.” It was

thus the universal religion of man of which Ramkrishna, Vivekananda and Rabindranath spoke. Gandhiji's idea was a practical expression of the dream of Akbar and Rammohan. It is the idea of fellowship of faiths. The best memorial to Gandhiji would be to propagate this ideal by establishing a ministry of the central government of India for Fellowship Of Faiths. There is need for emphasising the common aspects of essential unity of religions as against the non-essential differences. There is need for cultivating a spirit of toleration by promoting mutual respect and friendly esteem. There is need for practising the common and essential teachings of the great prophets and seers of the world.

While the full draught may upset ordinary mortals, a small dose of Gandhism may be of essential help to uplift ourselves and others around us. As says Sree Krishna:—"Shalpamapyasya Dharmasya Triate Mahato Bhayat." Selfless service even of a small degree will save us from the fear of death (by opening the road to immortality). The golden motto of the Evangelist is:—

" Do all the good you can,
In all the ways you can,
In all the places you can,
At all the times you can,
To all the people you can,
As long as ever you can."

A. C. DAS GUPTA, M.A.

RENASCENT INDIA

India has succeeded in throwing off the yoke of foreign domination after a long period of heroic struggle and patient suffering. She has attained in a measure her goal of political independence, although that independence is not indeed complete and integral. Now, the consolidation of freedom and its proper utilisation present perhaps a more formidable problem than its attainment. Political freedom is not after all an end unto itself, but just a means to a higher end. It is an opportunity of free self-development according to a nation's own peculiar genius, and also an opportunity of fearlessly and adequately fulfilling her role in world affairs and her divinely ordained mission in the march of human civilisation. Freedom is meaningless if in re-organising her collective life a nation either follows the path of blind imitation or falls back upon the policy of thoughtless revivalism. She must steer clear of the two extremes of imitationism and revivalism. The political re-awakening of India owes its vitality and inspiration to her spiritual renaissance. She has a distinctly spiritual mission to fulfil in the world. She must, therefore, apply her freedom to the task of thorough reconstruction of her national life on the basis of a sound synthesis between the modern scientific outlook and her ancient spiritual heritage. Exaggerated emphasis upon the one to the neglect of the other is sure to hinder the re-emergence of India as a truly stabilising force in world affairs, and as a new light and power in human evolution. It would be suicidal for her to cast away her rich spiritual heritage when all the world over there is an increasing realisation of the importance of spiritual values in an effective solution of the basic problems of human existence.

The history of India's cultural and spiritual renaissance is the history of increasing harmonisation of the divergent values of life. It is the history of integration of all that is best and noblest in the East and in the West,—a harmonious fusion of their distinctive ideals of life and patterns of thought. Raja Rammohan Roy and Poet Rabindranath Tagore, Sri Ramkrishna and Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Dr. Radhakrishnan and Sri Aurobindo, are some of the outstanding figures in the synthetising and re-vitalising movement of Indian renaissance. Sri Aurobindo represents a significant and fruitful culminating point of this movement. We shall briefly consider here the respective contributions of the aforesaid leaders of thought to *Raja Rammohan Roy* the mighty effort of renaissance India toward a complete integration of human life and a total transvaluation of all values.

Thomson and Garrett in their book "The Rise and The Fulfilment of the British Rule in India" give to Raja Rammohan Roy the same place of unique importance as the originator of the remarkable rapprochement of the two alien races, Indian and British, whereby the Eastern and Western cultures were intermingled. Rammohan's English biographer Miss S. D. Collet says, "Raja Rammohan Roy saw the new England being born out of the heart of the old England, and in him the new England first became acquainted with new India." The Raja spared no pains in making an extensive comparative study of the world's major religions including Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, and pointed his finger to the great spiritual truth that they are all agreed in respect of the fundamentals of spiritual life and experience. It was indeed Raja Rammohan Roy who laid the foundation of the comparative study of religions, and composed an exceedingly charming bouquet of rich spiritual fragrance, having culled together the finest flowers from the different religions of the world. Prof. Monier Williams has rightly

spoken of the Raja as the first really earnest investigator in the science of comparative theology which the world has produced.

Raja Rammohan Roy was true to the kindred points of heaven and home. He infused into his countrymen a new regard for life and society, and a new insight into the significance of human civilization. He strongly condemned all forms of religious escapism and barren asceticism, and recommended the ideal of healthy balanced spiritual unfoldment of human nature. He introduced very essential and much-needed reforms into the social organization and religious outlook of the Hindus, and yet eschewed the path of abrupt and violent revolutionary changes. His was the method of sweet reasonableness, gentle yet forceful persuasion, strong determined unyielding will-power. He devoted his life to a resuscitation and reconstruction of Indian national life, having flung wide open all the doors and windows through which the light of knowledge and the vital breath might freely flow in from all parts of the world as well as from the fountain-head of India's spiritual wisdom.

RABINDRANATH TAGORE

The intermingling of Eastern and Western cultures, which was the life-mission of Raja Rammohan Roy, was given by Poet Rabindranath Tagore a broader basis, a wider scope, and a deeper content. Himself a product of such intermingling, he achieved a marvellous synthesis of East and West on the cultural plane. He bore in his mental outlook traces of the influence of Paganism and modern Western thought on the one hand and also those of the influence of Vaisnavism and the Upanisads on the other. Such widely divergent influences were woven by the magic of his creative vision into an exquisitely beautiful texture of harmony.

Modern science discovers the truth of the world in Law—eternal unalterable Law. Ancient spiritual wisdom discovered the truth of the world in Joy—infinite creative Joy. Rabindranath looks upon Law as the mechanism through which creative Joy bursts forth in endless forms and in an unending procession of visible patterns. Paganism deifies the diversified forces and forms of Nature, and invites man to participate in the magnificent feast of delight provided by Nature. Ancient asceticism draws our attention away from the world, and points to some vast supra-cosmic Silence as the last word of wisdom. Rabindranath looks upon our life in the world as a rhythmic expression of the delight of that Divine Creator who constantly communicates to us through the multitudinous sights and sounds, songs and rhythms of Nature,* and yet transcends them all in an ineffable mystery. Just as joy is the deepest truth of the world, so also, Rabindranath holds in agreement with the Vaisnavas, love is the deepest form of self-fulfilment of life. But divine love, the poet insists, is not only to be enjoyed in the depth of silence, but also to be expressed in and through multiform action calculated to pull down all barriers between man and man, between country and country, and between the different races and peoples of the world.

Realisation of God in the heart of humanity and emphasis upon the fundamental spiritual unity of all existence, are distinctive features of Rabindranath's outlook on life. He sought the Divine in the peasant and the labourer, in the forlorn and the downtrodden. He sought the Divine in the multifarious bonds of human relationship, and in the storm and stress of human activity. And yet he knew that God was so unlimited that even countless limitations could not limit Him,—so

* *Kain vaine kate gundhe, kate gone kate chande.*
Arup tomar ropani kate jage katey par. (Gitanjali, No. 120).

immaculately perfect that even endless imperfections could not touch Him. He agrees with Hegel that the Infinite is not the negation or cancellation of the finite but rather its complete fulfilment; the true Infinite is indeed the unity of the limited and unlimited so that the unlimited expresses itself in and through the limited and the limited realises itself in the Unlimited. Only, the Infinite as conceived by Rabindranath is in its inmost essence not Thought or Idea as Hegel would have us believe, but creative Joy or Love, as the Upanisads declare. Rabindranath agrees with Bergson that the world is an unceasing process of creation and a continual upspringing of ever novel forms and qualities. The joy of life lies in free movement and perpetual creation,—in flying like the bird freely in the open sky towards the ever-receding horizon of the infinite Mystery. But he is also alive to the great truth of the Indian tradition that endless creation is not possible except on the basis of immovable spiritual calm, and that the cosmic drama is in ultimate analysis the creative dance of Shiva who is in essence eternally perfect and self-sufficient.

Having perceived God in the heart of humanity, in the evolutionary advance of Nature, in the march of human civilization, and in the tumult and turmoil of human action, Rabindranath was inspired by the ideal of all-inclusive human unity. He, therefore, laid much stress upon the intermingling of the different streams of human culture and upon free association on terms of equality of the world's different races and peoples. One integrated human family or international world-order is to emerge out of such intermingling and free association. His *Visva-Bharati* in Santiniketan is a living witness to the poet's dynamic vision of the cultural intermingling of mankind. Rabindranath lived all his life in a realm of

† *Asim se oke nime'nir ooge, shis bane soy anir mehe hane.*
(*Samskrita*, p. 134).

joy and beauty, love and laughter. He was drunk with the vision of what Plato would call the Form of Beauty as such, the fountain source of all charm and beauty. But he also strove to bring something of that love and beauty into the world around us and into the sphere of human relationship.

SRI RAMKRISHNA AND SWAMI VIVEKANANDA

In Sri Ramkrishna, the God-intoxicated saint of Dakshineswar, we have an inkling of the deepest trend of Indian culture. His life is a re-affirmation of the great message that the highest value of life lies in living realisation of the Spirit at its highest here and now in this very life. It is not enough to discover the articles of faith, creeds, or ethico-religious principles which are common to the different historical religions of the world. It is not enough to have an intellectual grasp of the elements of universality in the apparently incompatible faiths of the world. What is of much greater importance is immediate contact with that transcendent spiritual Reality from which all the world's historical faiths flow and to which they all lead. It is in the self-luminous harmony of infinitely rich spiritual experience that one comes across the deepest principle of reconciliation. India can hardly give her best to the world and properly fulfil her mission, if she casts away her rich spiritual heritage and is carried away by the rationalism, intellectual universalism and superficial humanism of Western civilization.

The life of Sri Ramkrishna is a challenge to the widespread scepticism, self-complacent rationalism and loss of confidence in Hinduism generated by the impact of Western civilization in India. It is a splendid illustration in modern times of the great saying of Jesus Christ: "Only the pure in heart shall enter the gates of Heaven." Yes, the true passport to the Kingdom of Truth is neither intellectual brilliance, nor extensive erudition, nor the

power for dialectical sabrerattling, but rather purity of the heart, sincerity of aspiration and singlemindedness of devotion. All doubts and reasonings are hushed into silence in the presence of spiritual illumination. Truth, when it descends into a genuinely aspiring soul, not only shines by its own intrinsic light, but also dispels the darkness in other minds, and kindles the torch in other souls. Ramkrishna's whole life is practical demonstration of the great truth that if a man has a genuine aspiration for the Divine, then he is sure to reach the goal, to wit, intimate union with the Divine, whatever the path he follows. The fundamental unity of all religions is indeed his central message. But, since all religions lead to the same goal, does it not follow that it is immaterial which religion a man follows? May not a person on grounds of convenience of expedience abandon his or her own religion in favour of another? That would be a grievous misunderstanding of the true message of Ramkrishna. Religion is, as he teaches, not a matter of creed or intellectual belief. It is a matter of direct spiritual realisation. Since sincere aspiration and single-minded devotion are the essential pre-conditions of direct spiritual realisation, and since all religions are capable of leading to the same goal, there is absolutely no need for a man to abandon his own religion. On the contrary, a man can attain spiritual fulfilment smoothly and speedily only along the lines of his own religion—the religion which is in his blood. The roots of a man's spiritual being are laid deep in the religion in which he is born. In consequence, the abandonment of one's own religion can only mean one thing, namely, spiritual death,—not spiritual progress.

Sri Ramkrishna discovered in self-luminous spiritual experience not only the unity of all religions, but also the unity of apparently conflicting philosophical systems. He pointed out that such ultimate standpoints in philosophic

thought as Advaitavāda (Unqualified Monism), Viśiṣṭadvaitavāda (Qualified Monism) and Dvaitavāda (Dualism) are not to be treated as rigidly fixed systems and essentially incompatible logical schemes, but only different landmarks in the Spirit's progressive self-realisation in man. They correspond to different stages in a man's spiritual self-unfoldment, and are consequently reconciled in the living reality of spiritual development. At the beginning it is undoubtedly a significant self-discovery on the part of the spiritual aspirant to realise himself as a distinctive spiritual entity essentially free from the bonds of Ignorance and capable of blissful communion with the supreme Divine. A deeper realisation comes upon him when he fully crosses the gulf of separation between the Divine and the devotee, and perceives himself as an eternal portion of the supreme Lord. But the highest summit is reached when he realises himself as essentially identical with the Divine in respect of being and essence.

Ramkrishna is like a heroic child of the Divine Mother who seized the Kingdom of Heaven by assault. By the Mother's Grace he had a direct access to the inmost sanctuary of the Spirit, and had a glimpse of its supernal splendours on the plane of the spiritualised mind. But he was no less alive to the immanence of the Divine in the All of existence and the essential divinity of man. He therefore placed before his countrymen the ideal of love and service as a necessary adjunct to spiritual liberation. Jesus Christ used to say: "Love thy neighbour as thyself." Now, the neighbour is not only the man who lives next-door, but the whole of humanity. Ramkrishna adds that not only mankind but the entire sentient creation should be treated as one's neighbour and must be approached in a spirit of love and service. When Swami Vivekananda expressed his desire to attain *nirvikalpa samadhi*, i.e., utter self-absorption in the supra-cosmic silence of the Spirit, he received a sharp

rebuke from his great Master and was reminded of his duty to function as an active source of strength and inspiration and illumination to the afflicted humanity. That is why we see the whole life of Swamiji as one unceasing effort towards a spiritual re-orientation of the life of humanity, fired by the ideal of serving the poor and the down-trodden. He charged his country-men with the noble mission of *Daridra-Narayana-Seva*, i.e., the mission of serving God as immanent in man in general and in the "have-nots" in particular. He felt the necessity of harmoniously blending together the Eastern emphasis upon transcendent spiritual realisation with the Western emphasis upon all-round material well-being which depends upon man's co-operative endeavours in the fields of science, industry, social reform, political organisation, physical training and the like. He was never tired of stressing the practical implications of the Vedanta. His was the ideal of reconstructing our life and society on the basis of the Vedantic teaching as regards the fundamental unity and essential divinity of mankind. If every man is potentially divine, no man should be looked down upon with contempt, or condemned to eternal damnation. It is surely possible for every man to attain spiritual liberation and immortality. Only, he must be roused from his slumbers, and made to realise the significance of his divine origin. If all men are essentially united in God, all artificial barriers between man and man should be pulled down, and every individual and nation should be allowed to grow from within in accordance with his or its own peculiar genius within the framework of one all-embracing Divine plan. If the soul is essentially free and immortal and embodied existence in the world a magnificent drama contrived and executed by the playful Divine, there can be no nobler ideal for a man than that of performing his distinctive role in the cosmic drama, inwardly attuned to the Infinite. A

realisation of the dynamic presence of the Divine in man carries with it the implication that inward spiritual experience is incomplete without outward divine action in the shape of boundless love and selfless service.

MAHATMA GANDHI

Mahatma Gandhi is another outstanding embodiment of the spirit of Indian renaissance. An exceedingly fine product of the cultural intermingling of East and West, he is an emblem of India's passion for freedom and creative urge. A great leader of action, he is no less a leader of thought. His whole life is an emphasis upon the desirability of fruitful union between knowledge and action and intimate correlation between free growth of individuality and collective well-being. Knowledge is, for him, not a purely intellectual affair, or barren scholarship divorced from the living currents of social existence; it is an affair of the entire personality, a dynamic perception of the basic truths of existence, a light revealed to the inward eye of the soul through continuous self-purification and self-sacrifice. Such knowledge cannot but issue in action,—unceasing and indefatigable action,—action directed to the welfare of one's country and the welfare of humanity. Such knowledge cannot but make a man rise in protest against lethargy and superstition, against injustice and oppression, against foreign domination and exploitation. Such knowledge cannot but make a man's heart beat in unison with the feelings and aspirations of his suffering countrymen and humanity at large. That is why the emancipation of his country from the yoke of foreign domination and the rut of internal disintegration was the ruling passion of Mahatma Gandhi's life. He was fully convinced that although every individual has a right to grow from within in accordance with his own distinctive genius, yet he has no right to deprive his country of the fruits of his immanent self-development.

Similarly, although every nation has a right to develop freely according to its own peculiar genius, it has surely no right to disturb the peace and harmony of the international order and disregard the collective good of mankind. Mahatma Gandhi thus showed by his life and teaching the way to a reconciliation between individualism and collectivism, between nationalism and internationalism.

What then is Mahatma Gandhi's greatest contribution to human civilisation? What, is his noblest message that the maladies of human existence can hardly be remedied without a reconstruction of our collective living on a spiritual basis and on the abiding foundations of peace and love and truth. He drew attention to the fact that a genuine "change of heart" on the part of men is of more vital importance than mere outward changes in the social structure or the political set-up. Such a change of heart can be effectuated only by soul-force, not by armed assault. The governing principle of Mahatmaji's life was the Truth as he conceived it. He was an ardent patriot, but yet patriotism was not the ultimate determinant of his action, because he placed religion before his country. He was a patriot, because he was a lover of the Truth, and a hater of injustice and oppression. Mahatmaji was a great humanitarian, but still not even humanitarianism was the ultimate determinant of his action, because he placed God above humanity. He was a humanitarian, because he was a lover of God as he conceived Him. It should not, however, be forgotten that religion was for the Mahatma essentially ethical in nature and that God was identified by him with Truth and Non-Violence conceived as ethical principles.

So, Mahatma Gandhi's call for spiritual re-construction of our collective living amounts to an all-out practical application of the ethical principles of Truth and Non-Violence to the social, political and international spheres of our life. Satyagraha, passive moral resistance,

non-violent non-co-operation, the vow of fasting unto death, and the like, are the outcome of such application. Gandhiji firmly believed in the efficacy of moral power in producing the desired change of heart in the powers that be. Sweet reasonableness and gentle persuasion, patient negotiation and thread-bare discussion, are the first step in a moral warfare. Should that prove abortive, resort must be had to unyielding moral resistance and non-co-operation of the non-violent type such as yields not to any physical torture and fears not the frowns of death. The value and efficacy of such moral resistance would be in direct proportion to the purity of love for man and devotion to truth by which it is inspired. True non-violence is non-violence not only in respect of speech and action but also in respect of thought and feeling. Such non-violence it is which Gandhiji would call "non-violence of the brave." Gandhi's whole life was an unceasing effort towards the remoulding of human society on the foundation of the pure ethical consciousness. He believed in the transformation of human life by the soft radiance of soul-force as reflected from the ethical plane.

The expression "Ramrajya," which very aptly describes the ideal of Mahatma Gandhi, is highly significant. It was the mission of Sri Ramchandra as a divine personality to establish the pure *sattwic* or ethical consciousness in the evolving human life. He came to the world to subjugate the forces of savagery and barbarism, and to set up the reign of Law, i.e., the reign of justice and righteousness in society. Mahatma Gandhi was also essentially inspired by the ethical ideal. But in being so inspired he proceeded to exalt the ethical truth to the highest rank of God himself. The mission of Sri Ramchandra was no doubt ethical, but he did not erect the ethical principle into the one supreme truth. He did not, therefore, see anything undivine in the employment of physical force or military strength as controlled by an

ethical motive; he believed in the destruction of hostile and reactionary forces under the guidance of the Divine Will and with a view to a new order of creation. Mahatma takes an uncompromising stand on the principle of non-violence in dealing with all human opposition. For him non-violence is not a mere policy, but a creed. It is an eternal principle or verity non-different from God. It must therefore have unlimited applicability. It can hardly be violated with justification except in the case of those for whom the only alternative to violence is cowardly submission.

SARVAPALLI RADHAKRISHNAN

In the domain of philosophic thinking we have in Sir Sarvapalli Radhakrishnan a very powerful exponent of the New Hinduism. A brilliant product of Indian renaissance he is a master of synthetic thinking. He has been described by his famous English interpreter C. E. Joad as a "liaison officer between East and West." He seeks to build a bridge between the traditional wisdom of the East and the new knowledge and energy of the West, that each may be enriched by the qualities of the other.¹ He is a philosopher bilingual who, while interpreting the traditional wisdom of the East to compose the current distraction of the West, brings the force and energy of the West to vitalise the apathy of the East. In interpreting Eastern wisdom, Radhakrishnan seeks to disinter characteristic Indian conceptions from their antique settings and to make them living to the modern reader. He addresses himself to the task not merely of recording, catalogueing and classifying the views of ancient thinkers, but of bringing them to life and showing them in their bearing upon the perennial problems of existence. In evaluating modern thought, he accepts

¹ *Counter Attack From The East*, p. 38.

² *Ibid.*, p. 34.

whatever is best and noblest in it and incorporates that into the framework of ancient Eastern wisdom. He seeks "to pour the wine of new thought into the skins of an old tradition." For instance, he accepts the theory of evolution from Western thought and conceives it as a movement of the entire creation towards the ultimate goal of absorption in the supracosmic Absolute. The object of the world-process is for him the achievement of a state of universal and changeless perfection, in which not only all individual souls fall back into and are merged in God, but also God falls back into and is merged in the Absolute.

In regard to the ancient Hindu tradition, Radhakrishnan maintains that it is not enough to know the past, we must develop it in the light of the present. Instead of resting content with the foundations nobly laid in the past, we must "build a greater edifice in harmony with ancient endeavour as well as the modern outlook." In regard to the current distraction of the West, Radhakrishnan holds that the failure of modern life is a failure in the life of the spirit. Modern Western civilisation is lopsided in so far as while it makes one intellectually over-developed it leaves one spiritually under-developed. There is a wide disparity between scientific knowledge and social wisdom, between technical skill and experience on the one hand, and, on the other, lack of that sense of the higher values of life which alone can mobilise scientific knowledge and technical skill in the interests of human peace and happiness. Radhakrishnan is convinced that as matters stand to-day "we are taught to fly in the air like birds, and to swim in the water like fishes, but how to live on the earth we do not know." Science has furnished our life with abundant material comforts and given to the world amazing material unity. But despite our endless accumulation of wealth and comforts we are sadly disappointed in our pursuit of happiness; despite

our achievement of world-unity in regard to the material basis of life we are passing through distressing spiritual disintegration and following a suicidal path. The only way to save mankind is to achieve a spiritual unity of outlook corresponding to the unity of the material basis of life.

Hinduism, Radhakrishnan points out, has a definite contribution to make to the much-needed spiritual re-orientation of outlook. Universal toleration is of the essence of Hinduism. It does not believe in any statutory methods of salvation. It does not believe in divine favouritism, or in any human monopoly of spiritual wisdom. It does not insist upon rigid conformity to any particular set of theological dogmas and creeds, but lays emphasis upon ethical regulation of conduct directed to direct spiritual realisation of the Truth. Theological dogmas and creeds are only inadequate and imperfect mental formulations or symbolisations of the one infinite Spirit. Hinduism is more a way of life than a form of thought. While it gives absolute liberty in the world of thought, it enjoins a strict code of practice. Radhakrishnan takes from Hinduism the clue to a reconciliation of the divergent religions of the world. Creeds and dogmas in respect of which different religions and religious sects so violently disagree are all in the nature of imperfect symbolisations of one ultimate Truth. They are all united in one common spiritual quest, and should therefore be imbued with a common spirit of co-operation. Symbolism is an essential ingredient in all religion, not only in polytheistic but also in monotheistic forms of religion. Just as the multitudinous deities of polytheism are only symbolic representations of the different attributes and aspects of one and the same Godhead, so also the personal God of monotheism is in ultimate analysis no more than a symbolisation of the one ineffable, impersonal Absolute. According to Radha-

krishnan, just as the atom is a symbol of an unknown physical reality, so God is a symbol of an unknown spiritual reality. "The idea of God is an interpretation of experience."⁶ God is only the Absolute conceived from the human end.

Radhakrishnan looks upon religion as the most "hopeful political instrument for peace which the world has ever seen."⁷ But in order to function as an instrument for peace religion must be "not so much a theory of the supernatural as an attitude of spirit, a temper of mind." It should be understood that the central dogma of all true religion is "the possible perfection of man, his inherent divinity and the invincible solidarity of all living beings with each other in the life of God."⁸ There need be no conflict between different religions, because while the complete truth is not to be found in any one religion, every religion has its individual contribution to make to man's understanding of the spiritual world and of his purpose and function as an integral part thereof. There need also be no conflict between different nations, and no denial of freedom to individuals. God wills his creation to be a rich harmony, not a colourless uniformity. While every individual should be allowed to grow from within so that the nation to which he belongs may be not only materially prosperous but also spiritually opulent, every nation must bring its individual cultural contribution to the harmonious government of the political world. Radhakrishnan's political ideal for the world is not so much a single empire with a homogeneous civilization and a single communal will, but a brotherhood of free nations differing profoundly in life and mind, habits and institutions, existing side by side in peace and order, harmony and co-operation, each contributing to the world its unique and specific best, which is irreducible to the terms of the

⁶ *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 86.

⁷ *Radhakrishnan's Kalki*, p. 94.

⁸ *Radhakrishnan's Kalki*, p. 68.

other. The cosmopolitanism of the 18th century and the nationalism of the 19th century are combined in his ideal of a world commonwealth, which allows every branch of the human family to find freedom, security and self-realisation in the larger life of mankind.

Another noteworthy feature of Radhakrishnan's philosophy is his concept of universal liberation (*sarva-mukti*), or "social salvation," as Joad has termed it. Joad holds that it springs from a synthetic fusion of such widely different strains of thought as Oriental mysticism, scientific evolution and Christian personalism. Radhakrishnan accepts the reality of evolution, acknowledges the importance of individuality, and reconciles them with the ideal of universal changeless perfection. He rejects the notion of conditional immortality, and holds that if the infinite love of God is not a myth, universal salvation is a certainty. He rejects also the notion of personal salvation, and holds that whatever it may mean, if it be endlessly continued will be sick unto death. True perfection, which is the object of the world-process is reached when individual selves fall back into and are merged in God, and God in his turn falls back into and is merged in the Absolute. But while on the attainment of the ultimate goal of perfection God and man and world-process are all to be merged in the Absolute, until that final consummation is reached the human individual as well as the Divine Ruler has an important part to play in the scheme of evolution. A man, therefore, cannot attain true perfection through mere individual realisation of God. He must be integrated only with himself and with the Divine immanent in him, but also with his entire social environment comprising other selves. If one single soul fails to reach the divine destiny, to that extent the universe is a failure. Until universal perfection is reached the liberated souls, although at the moment of their release from the fetters of Karma they achieve a universality of

spirit, nevertheless retain individuality as a centre of action as long as the cosmic process continues. Radhakrishnan says, "So long as some individuals are unredeemed, the other freed souls have work to do and so retain their individuality."^{*}

SRI AUROBINDO

The spirit of cultural synthesis and reconciliation of life-impulses which is a characteristic feature of the spiritual renaissance of India reaches its consummation in Sri Aurobindo, the great re-conciler. It was indeed a very significant truth that Romain Rolland, the great French savant, uttered when he remarked that Sri Aurobindo was "the greatest synthesis up to this day of the genius of Europe and the genius of Asia." In Sri Aurobindo we find a synthetic fusion and amazing fulfilment not only of the different currents of Indian culture but also of the two broad streams of human civilization, Eastern and Western. And the synthesis he has achieved shows a new way to the overcoming of the present crisis of human civilization and the ushering in of a new era of abiding peace, progress and harmony.

Sri Aurobindo shows the way to reconciliation not only in the domain of philosophic speculation, but also in the field of life and action. His Integral Monism (Purnadvaitavada) embodies his unique synthesis at the intellectual level. And his Integral Yoga (Purnayoga) embodies his unique synthesis in the practical sphere.

RECONCILIATION IN THE DOMAIN OF PHILOSOPHIC SPECULATION

According to the Purnadvaitavada or Integral Idealism of Sri Aurobindo, the nature of ultimate reality may be summed up in the concept of Purnabrahman—one integral undivided multi-poised Spirit. Purnabrahman

^{*} *An Idealist View of Life*, p. 320.

is the concrete unity of the Transcendent Absolute (Parabrahman), the Cosmic Divine (Iswara), and the unique Individual Self (Jivatman), which may be regarded as His three fundamental and eternally real poises of being or modes of existence. Advaitavada's emphasis upon the supreme reality of the supra-cosmic Silence or ineffable Superconscience, Visistadvaitavada's emphasis upon the sovereign reality of the Divine Personality, and Dvaitavada's insistence upon the distinct reality of individual selves offering their tributes of love and devotion to the one supreme Lord, Visnu, are not to be treated as incompatible positions, but rather as capable of complete reconciliation in the conception of Purnabrahman which has a triple status of being. The main tendency of Eastern mysticism has been to soar up to an all-negating experience of the Truth as supra-cosmic Silence or ineffable Superconscience as in evidenced in the Buddhistic conception of Nirvana and the Sankarite conception of Nirguna Brahman. On the contrary, the dominant tendency of Western thought has been to conceive of the Truth not so much as supra-cosmic transcendence as a cosmic synthesis. Western thought has mainly conceived of the ultimate philosophical principle as asynthetic of the cosmic manifold, as an ultimate integrating principle of the universe. While Materialism has designated this ultimate integrating principle of the universe. While Materialism has designated this ultimate integrating principle as Matter, Vitalism has called it Life-Force, and Idealism has called it Universal Mind. Even Western Absolutism has had no full grasp of the supra-cosmic silence of the Spirit. The Absolute of Hegel, for instance, is, strictly speaking, in the nature of a synthetic unity, not a transcendent unity; it is a unity in so far as it unified the cosmic multiplicity, so that the Absolute is no less dependent upon the universe for its self-fulfilment than the latter is

dependent upon the Absolute for its self-completion. Bradley has indeed conceived of the Absolute as a supra-rational and supra-relational unity, but even Bradley's Absolute is not a supra-cosmic transcendent unity in the strict sense of the term. In conceiving the Absolute as a synthetic unity and not as pure supra-cosmic transcendence, Bradley remains strictly loyal to the Hegelian tradition. The world of appearance is, no doubt transformed beyond recognition in the specific synthetic experience of the Absolute, as conceived by Bradley, has "no assets beyond the appearances," and would be a mere nothing without the world of appearance in as much as appearances are the very stuff of which the Absolute is made. Sri Aurobindo maintains that although the Absolute in respect of its mode of existence as cosmic universality functions as an integrating principle and a synthesis of the cosmic manifold, it has also a higher poise of being in respect of which it is pure transcendence, absolute freedom and an ineffable mystery. Although the Cosmic and the Individual are as eternally real as the Transcendent, the Transcendent is more fundamental than the Universal and the Universal is more fundamental than the Individual. The Absolute as supra-cosmic Transcendence is an infinite Plenum and eternally sufficient unto itself even without the world of manifestation. It is absolutely free either to allow or not to allow the emergence of the world of manifestation. The actual emergence of the world does not in any way detract from the full freedom of the Absolute. The principle of actualisation is to be sought in the element of delight in the nature of the Absolute. Infinite delight has a dynamic as well as a static aspect; it includes the delight of mutable becoming as well as the delight of immutable being, the delight of variable self-expression as well as that of unvarying self-existence. It is thus Sri Aurobindo's conception of the Absolute as infinite delight which con-

tains the secret of reconciliation of such apparently incompatible aspects of the Absolute as supra-cosmic silence on which Eastern mysticism lays stress and the cosmic universality which Western thought emphasises.

Since universal matter, universal life, universal mind, and so on, are conceived as different grades of manifestation of the Absolute as cosmic universality, Purnadvaita-vāda has no difficulty in reconciling such apparently conflicting philosophical positions as Materialism, Vitalism, Mental Idealism, and so on, into one comprehensive unity of vision. What is, in its view, to be deprecated is the tendency to exaggerate any one of these components of reality into the sole ultimate principle. While none of them can be said to represent the whole Truth, all of them are without doubt true and real forms of expression of the one multiform Truth.

RECONCILIATION IN THE FIELD OF LIFE AND ACTION

Sri Aurobindo achieves a remarkably unique synthesis of East and West not only in respect of philosophic vision but also in the field of life and action. He discovers the clue to this grand synthesis at the fountain source of Indian culture, I mean, the Vedas, the Upanisads, and the Gita, of which he gives a masterly interpretation in the light of his own integral spiritual realisation.

To live like man in the world and to drink life to the lees—that gives us the keynote of Western civilisation. It consists in an unwearied pursuit of the values of Life and Humanity. Utmost development of the latent possibilities of human nature physical, vital and mental, progressive amelioration of the conditions of collective living, gradual enrichment and embellishment of life through increasing control over the forces of Nature, and so on, have gone to constitute the norm of life in the West.

In consequence, we find that the Western genius has shone forth at its best in the sphere of material progress; industrial revolution, phenomenal progress of science, technological advancement, continual social reconstruction, and amazing political organization have been among its remarkable achievements. With materialism as its source of inspiration, it is unceasing and untiring in its discovery of the deep secrets of Nature and in harnessing the unlimited pent-up energies of matter. But, despite all this, there seems to be something basically wrong about the fundamental drift of Western civilisation. It seems to contain within itself the seeds of self-destruction and disintegration. This is borne out by the last two devastating world wars and the further possibility of still another world catastrophe threatening to engulf the whole of humanity. The West has endeavoured to carry life to perfection without any earnest enquiry into the deeper significance of life and the true principle of perfection. It has been ignored that mere pursuit of pleasure for the sake of pleasure invariably leads to the opposite of pleasure in as much as the essence of pleasure lies beyond itself. Mere possession of wealth and power can hardly bring fulfilment to life without an apprehension of the supreme values of life. Mere accumulation of means, however vast and unlimited, can hardly produce happiness without a clear perception of the true end of life. The impulse to enjoy life and to conquer the world has been indulged in utter disregard of the soul which is the source of all value. An attempt has been made to develop life on a harmonious basis having ignored the true harmonising and integrating principle of life. An endeavour has been made to realise the values of humanity, having disregarded that supreme reality of which man is just an image, an evolving form of manifestation.

The dominant tendency of the East has been, on the contrary, to realise the Spirit in its transcendent purity

and self-shining splendour. The values of life and of humanity have been subordinated to those of the spirit. Self-sacrifice has been held up as a much nobler ideal than self-aggrandisement, and renunciation prized above passionate attachment to the ephemeral pleasures of life. Possession of wealth and power, (artha), lawful satisfaction of desires (kama), establishment of justice and righteousness in the administration of social affairs (dharma), are no doubt very important functions and duties of life. But they can hardly exhaust its full significance, and be accepted as ends unto themselves. The true end of life is the realisation of higher spiritual values (moksa), and consequently, all other functions and duties of human existence must be so adjusted as to be conducive to the attainment of the supreme end. The history of Indian culture has therefore been the history of endlessly diverse experiments with the spiritual Truth, exploration of different levels of spiritual experience and different lines of approach to the Divine, and the unravelling of the different aspects and facets of the one infinitely opulent and multiform Reality. The Eastern genius has shone forth at its best in the spheres of philosophy and religion, and mysticism and yoga. But in her eager pursuit of spiritual values, India has during the dark middle ages of her history, neglected in a large measure the values of life and humanity. The belief has much too long been widespread and dominant that the call of the Spirit means a total recoil from Matter, that the cessation from birth is the one right use of human birth, that the acceptance of physical life is necessarily an act of ignorance, and that renunciation of works is the sole path of knowledge.* That has been responsible for the best brains of India resorting to the path of renunciation and ascetic recoil from the works of life and the functions of social existence.

* See Anandadev's *The Life Divine*, Vol. I, p. 35-36.

Sri Aurobindo stands for the integration of the values of life and humanity with those of mystic realisation and spiritual self-perfection. He points out that there is no essential incompatibility between life and spirit, between material and social progress and spiritual perfection, and between universal brotherhood of man and mystic union with the ineffable one. Active participation in the joyous movement of life, utmost development of the latent possibilities of human nature, gradual enlargement of the spirit of co-operation and concerted action toward the ideal of universal brotherhood and harmony are not only temporal ends but constitute the intention of the Spirit as actively immanent in the historical order. It must however be remembered that life cannot be fully enjoyed without realisation of the truth of life in the Spirit, human nature cannot have its complete fulfilment without a self-exceeding or self-transcending in a supra-human out-flowering, and the universal brotherhood of man can hardly be realised without a dynamic perception of the unity of all human individuals and nations in the identity of the Spirit which is transcendent as well as universal. On the other hand, mystic union with the ineffable One is a kind of experience without which perfection can hardly be attained and Reality can hardly be comprehended in its deepest essence and highest glory. Some amount of asceticism and renunciation—internal self-naughting and self-surrender—are essential conditions of such transcendent spiritual realisation, as Indian sages have never wearied of emphasising. But it is a complete mistake to suppose that to realise the transcendent Spirit would mean a liquidation of individuality, a recoil from Matter, an withdrawal from the works of life, and an indifference to the march of evolution and social progress. An integral realisation of the Spirit would rather show that individuality, universality and the will to dynamic self-manifestation in material conditions are no less

important truths about its nature than its transcendent purity. The complete truth can hardly be attained until a man understands how "the passionate aspiration of man upward to the Divine" is to be related to "the descending movement of the Divine leaning downward to embrace eternally its manifestation." Knowledge of the truth of life in the Spirit is incomplete without knowledge of the significant immanence of the Spirit in life. So, the ideal that Sri Aurobindo presents to mankind is neither the utmost development of life in utter disregard to the Spirit, nor a mystic realisation of the Spirit in ascetic recoil from life, but a total reconstruction of life and society on the basis of integral realisation of the Spirit. The Eastern devotion to the Spirit and the Western regard for Life are synthesised in Sri Aurobindo's ideal of the total spiritualisation of life and its material basis,—the complete divine transformation of man's collective living,—"the outflowing of the Divine in Man."

Mahatma Gandhi's greatest contribution to human civilisation is not so much his exaltation of the principle of non-violence as his emphasis upon the need of a thorough reconstruction of human society upon a spiritual basis. He clearly perceived that a mere change in the externals of life, an alteration in social structure or political arrangement, was not sufficient for the establishment of *Ramrajya*, i.e., the kingdom of righteousness in the world. What is of much greater importance is a genuine change of heart in the persons who are to run the socio-political machine. Ultimately, it is the human factor which counts, not so much the social institutions we build or the political apparatus we set up or the ideologies we profess. Mahatmaji believed that the human factor could effectively be changed by an application of in the socio-political field of the ethical principles of truth and non-violence. He identified religion with ethics, and God with the principles of truth and Non-

violence, and consequently, the spiritual re-construction of society meant for him its refashioning on the basis of such ethical principles. But the Death instinct in man, the Devil in human nature, the subterranean forces of the human unconscious, irrational that they are, are not always amenable to the appeal of law and reason. Efforts at peaceful settlement having failed, there may often arise the need for diplomacy and counterviolence. And if there is an occasion a justifiable scope for diplomacy and counterviolence—as Sri Krishna's teaching on the battle-field of Kuruksetra shows—then God can hardly be identified with the ethical principles of truth and non-violence, nor can they be treated as absolute truths of unlimited application. They are in essence mental formulations of limited applicability of the inscrutable Divine Will or the supra-mental spiritual Truth. It is also a mistake to suppose that the employment of violence is necessarily always an unethical or anti-spiritual act. The institution of capital punishment and the killing of the enemy on the battlefield are not without ethical sanction. Moreover, it is quite possible for a man to employ violence, as the Gita teaches, not actuated by considerations of individual or even collective good, but as an instrument of the Divine and for the fulfilment of the Divine purpose in the world, having transcended the mental region of violence and non-violence, virtue and vice, and being united with the supreme Spirit. Sri Aurobindo maintains that a final and effective liquidation of the forces of evil and ignorance can be achieved only when in the course of evolution the sovereign dynamism of the Spirit—the Supermind—will be brought into overt operation in the evolving earth-consciousness.

All the leading figures in Indian spiritual renaissance have emphasised the need for a spiritual re-orientation of outlook on life. The unity of all religions and the dynamisation in life of the universal spiritual truth have

been the central theme of their exhortations. In expounding the unity of religions Raja Rammohan makes an extensive comparative study of the different religions of the world and exhibits the remarkable affinities and points of agreement that run through them. Sri Ramkrishna lays emphasis upon the sincerity of spiritual aspiration as the essence of religion and the identity of the goal of spiritual experience to which all religions lead, if sincerely pursued. Mahatma Gandhi says that all religions are but different ways of expressing and naming the same Truth variously called God, Allah, Iswara, Jehovah, and so on. Radhakrishnan holds that while no religion has a monopoly of spiritual wisdom, all religions are necessarily inadequate symbolisations of that basic spiritual experience which is essentially ineffable and incommunicable in nature. Now, all of them have emphasised that the unity and harmony of spiritual experience should be made dynamic in our life. Devotion to the Spirit must express itself in and through a genuine love of mankind and selfless service of humanity including the destitute and the downtrodden and the untouchable. Realisation of the Spirit in the depth of silence of one's own being must issue forth in an unceasing current of divine works devoted to the collective good of man. Swami Vivekananda used to speak of putting the Vedanta into practice, and meant by it a life of selfless service and a passing through the weal and woe of embodied existence in a spirit of complete detachment and absolute fearlessness. But the question which forces itself into our mind at this stage is this. How far is a life of action compatible with the attainment of ultimate spiritual illumination? And can truly divine works be performed with our body, life, and mind, which are imperfect modifications of the lower nature (*apara prakriti*), or creations of Ignorance (*Avidya*)? It is a supreme paradox of spiritual life that action seems possible only so long as a veil of Ignorance or self-oblivion

is thrown upon the Self, and when the veil is torn and the Self shines forth in its pure effulgence, the springs of all action appear gradually drying up. Sri Ramkrishna once remarked about Swami Vivekananda that when he would fully realise his own self it would no longer be possible for him to retain his body and act in the world. The prophecy proved true to the letter in the life of Vivekananda. This is traceable to two distinct reasons. First, complete liberation from the lower nature (*apara prakriti*) has a general tendency to lead the soul to some vast static realisation and blissful quiescence in the bosom of the silent, immobile Brahman. Secondly, the physical, vital and mental parts of existence—the tabernacle of the flesh—cannot but appear an undesirable superimposition or an impediment to the completely illumined soul. Sri Aurobindo, therefore, maintains that in order to bring about a perfect union of knowledge and action (*jnana* and *karma*) and to carry to perfection the art of living in tune with the Infinite, two things are essential. After full liberation from the lower nature or primal ignorance, a voluntary self-surrender should be made to the higher dynamic nature of the Divine (*Para Prakriti* or Super-nature or *Shakti*), and the Spirit should be realised not only in its aspect of vast silence and timeless perfection but also in its aspect of endless creativity and continuous self-manifestation. Secondly, the entire human nature including not only the mental and the vital but also the inconscient physical,—not only the narrow surface being but also the abysmally dark unconscious regions,—must be thoroughly illumined and transformed by the light and power of the supra-mental truth-consciousness. It is quite possible by means of spiritual *sadhana* to achieve this transformation and turn the tabernacle of the flesh into a perfectly flawless image of the Divine and medium of His self-manifestation. Complete integration of human personality cannot be achieved without a total divine

transformation of man's embodied existence. And true unification of the plurality of human individuals and nations into a thoroughly integrated international order can hardly be achieved without complete integration of human personality through supra-mental transformation.

The poet-seer Rabindranath Tagore had a vivid and luminous perception of the Spirit in its aspect of cosmic universality. He had a mystic vision of the fundamental unity of all existence. God is in his view that supreme integrating principle who harmonises all men, all communities, all races, and unifies the entire universe including the apparently unconscious Nature and the semi-conscious animal kingdom. God is present at all the levels and strata of human society, and secretly determines the course of human history. God is to be realised not only in the depth of silence of one's own being, in the shrine of shrines of one's own heart ("Antara majhe tumi eka ekaki tumi antara vyapini"), but also in the infinite variety of the world of manifestation ("Jagater majhe kata vicitra tumi he tumi vicitrarupini"), comprising the varied forms of conscious existence and also the charms and graces and the awe-inspiring forces of Nature. The religion of man which Rabindranath preaches has three cardinal features. First, man is conceived as the crown of the whole process of evolution. God is in intimate touch with man, and is definable in terms of humanity. Secondly, Rabindranath agrees with Hegel that the Infinite is not the negation, but rather the fulfilment, of the finite. The Infinite of Rabindranath is not, however, a pure thought-structure or "a ballet of bloodless categories," as Hegel would have us believe, but creative delight and love. Man's religion consists in knowing the immanent Infinite through intimate personal experience, and in joining hands with Him in a sort of creative comradeship. Thirdly, as the Infinite dwelling in the human heart is identical with the Infinite manifested

in the world, man should break the walls of his private chamber, come out of the seclusion of his insular egoistic existence, and get united with the wide outside world. He should mingle his being with the whole of humanity through social service and love and expansion of consciousness. He should also realise his fundamental unity with Nature through aesthetic appreciation and a mystic feeling of kinship.

Radhakrishnan is in agreement with Rabindranath in regard to the fundamental unity of the universe understood in all its implications and bearings. A man should be integrated not only with himself but also with his environment including other selves. Out of the fundamental spiritual unity of all existence he develops his concepts of universal liberation and final absorption in the Absolute. Since a man cannot be divorced from his environment, he cannot attain true perfection until all individuals attain perfection. "In a true sense the ideal individual and the perfect community arise together." The freed souls must therefore retain their individuality and continue to function as centres of action so long as the cosmic process continues. But when the cosmic process comes to an end, when all living beings achieve their immortality in God, God who is the Absolute itself from the cosmic point of view, gets in turn integrated with the Absolute and merges in its static perfection. (Nirvana). Nirvana is then the final end, evolution the method, God the mediator and guide, so far as this world plot is concerned. When the cosmic process is consummated, "Earth and heaven would be no more, the timeless and the transcendent alone remain."⁶

Sri Aurobindo admits the fundamental spiritual unity of the universe and also the divinity and possible perfectibility of every form of empirical existence. But he has a much deeper insight into the reality and divine significance of cosmic evolution and a higher estimate of

the supra-human possibilities of human nature. He not only links up the upward movement of human aspiration with the evolutionary endeavour of Nature, but also interprets them both in the context of the downward movement of the Spirit's self-manifestation in the apparent contraries of His Nature. He does not believe in Nirvana as the ultimate goal of life; nor does he believe in any final cessation of the time process. In his view, time is an endless as well as a beginningless process with the Timeless as its ultimate support and background; the cosmic flow is an unceasing process of creation characterised by infinitely diverse modes of Divine self-fulfilment achieved through different schemes of evolution. God is an eternally real poise of being of the Absolute; and the spiritual Individual is an eternally real component of the Divine. Life is indeed a common enterprise, a kind of partnership concern, of man and God, the finite and the Infinite, who are bound together in a sort of creative comradeship. But this creative comradeship of man and God is, as Sri Aurobindo views it, fraught with an inexhaustible spiritual significance. The goal of the scheme of evolution in which we are involved is not simply the attainment of a universality of the Spirit, or the expansion of our consciousness to the dimensions of the universe, but also a "transcendentalisation of our being," *i.e.*, the heightening and exceeding and transforming of our entire nature down to the inconscient physical by the light and power of the transcendent Spirit. The goal of evolution is not Nirvana, whether individual or universal. The creative advance of Nature is not aimed at the absorption of all living beings in the static perfection of the Absolute on the attainment of universal salvation. The immanent end of the evolutionary advance is rather the dawn of an era of unfettered divine creation on the basis of the transformation of Ignorance Into Knowledge. Sri Aurobindo believes in increasing

cosmic realisation of the infinite dynamic possibilities of the supra-cosmic Spirit. He believes in increasingly higher grades of self-manifestation of the Divine in the life of evolving humanity. The future of the cosmic process is, therefore, envisaged by him as the evolution of Man into Superman, and that of the Superman again into still higher types of gnostic being. The ultimate goal of the slow, faltering, meandering course of evolution in the Ignorance is for Sri Aurobindo, not a state of static absorption in timeless perfection, but a new order of absolutely free and unimpeded progression in the Knowledge.

DR HIRIDAS CHAUDHURI.

